Vampires

The Myths, Legends, & Lore

Aubrey Sherman

Vampires

THE MYTHS, LEGENDS, & LORE

AUBREY SHERMAN

adamsmedia
Avon, Massachusetts

Contents

INTRODUCTION

PART 1: THE HISTORY OF VAMPIRES

CHAPTER 1: The Origins of Vampires

CHAPTER 2: Vampires' Attributes, Behavior, and Environs

PART 2: VAMPIRES FROM AROUND THE WORLD

CHAPTER 3: Greek and Slavic Vampires

CHAPTER 4: Romanian and German Vampires

CHAPTER 5: Vampires of the United Kingdom

CHAPTER 6: Vampires of the Far East and India

CHAPTER 7: Vampires of North and South America

Part 3: VamPires in Pop Culture

CHAPTER 8: Vampires in Literature

CHAPTER 9: Vampires in Film

CHAPTER 10: Vampires in Television

CHAPTER 11: Vampires in Games

CHAPTER 12: Great Vampires of History

CHAPTER 13: Vampire Crimes

Part 4: VamPires Among Us

CHAPTER 14: Vampires Today

CHAPTER 15: The Fearless Vampire Hunters

APPENDIX: Recommended Nonfiction Reading

Copyright

INTRODUCTION

IN THE SHADOWS of our imagination lurk the creatures of the night. Tall, bone-thin, possessed of an exotic, frightening beauty, their eyes glow with a red spark that holds you fast while sharp white teeth champ against ruby lips and then sink into your flesh.

Vampires have been our dark companions in literature and art, myth, and religion from the early centuries of civilization. But during the past 150 years, more than any other legendary figure the vampire has been romanticized and eroticized.

For many people, vampires represent the dichotomous relationship between love and death, between eros and thanatos. Even as you understand that vampires can only survive by drawing on the blood of the living, it is this very act that attracts you to them.

Le Vampire, lithograph by R. de Moraine, 1864

Why is the legend of the vampire so attractive? Perhaps because it mirrors human absorption with the phenomenon of death—vampires, after all, are suspended between life and death; they are what Bram Stoker, author of *Dracula*, famously referred to as "the undead." From this shrouded world they hold forth the promise of eternal life, albeit at a terrible price. Or maybe they interest us because vampires are drawn to our blood, and blood is the essence of our existence; as Renfield, Dracula's minion, puts it, "The blood is the life."

Today vampires more often inspire lust than repulsion—whether it's the sparkly Edward Cullen of Stephenie Meyer's *Twilight* saga; the brooding Bill Compton and Eric Northman, the male vampires at the heart of Charlaine Harris's Sookie Stackhouse stories; or Angel, the tormented vampire and one-time lover of Buffy the Vampire Slayer. Vampires also play an influential role in a subculture: goths, who dress in black, sport multiple body piercings, and find their muse in the fiction of Anne Rice and Poppy Z. Brite.

As you explore the myths and legends of vampires in the pages of this book, you will come to better understand these mysterious, powerful, dangerous, exotic creatures and may even find the roots of your own fascination with them.

PART 1

THE HISTORY OF VAMPIRES

CHAPTER 1
The Origins of Vampires

"I am glad that [the house] is old and big. I myself am of an old family."

—COUNT DRACULA, *DRACULA* BY BRAM STOKER

THROUGHOUT THE CENTURIES and in dozens of cultures, vampires remain a centerpiece of the darker sides of lore and mythology, and our current passion for night terrors shows no signs of waning. Part of that fascination may be attributed to our fervent hope that there is life after death. If there is ongoing life in the spiritual world, is it really a leap of faith to believe that there may well be life after death that exists in the underbelly of our own world?

LIVE LONG AND PROSPER

Any research of vampires or vampirism throughout history inevitably leads to the genesis of the bloodsucker as we know it today—Bram Stoker's seminal 1897 novel, *Dracula*. While much of the praise for *Dracula* is deserved, it must be noted that there exists a much richer history surrounding the legends of what are commonly referred to as *revenants*—individuals who return from the dead. Like the revered Greek and Egyptian gods of mythology, there are numerous legends, superstitions, and beliefs highlighting a dark contingent of vampiric creatures that tour the underworld, and play on our most primal fears. Given that most vampire folklore rarely uses the word *vampire*, how has the traditional vampire evolved from these stories of the undead?

INCUBI AND SUCCUBI

The *incubus* of ancient folklore was believed to be a male demon who forced unwanted sexual relations on a sleeping woman. In female form, the demon is known as a *succubus*. Both apparitions are often linked to early European vampiric entities, including the German *alp* and the Hungarian *lidérc*. Even Brazil has its own form of incubus, the *boto*, which seduces women and leads them to the river. Of course, the incubus made for a handy—and plausible—excuse for unwanted pregnancies.

Tales of vampiric revenants vary greatly depending on their country of origin,

their subsequent incarnation, and which folklorist or historian is telling of their exploits. The majority of creatures now cited as vampires or vampiric in nature are typically human and/or animal hybrids, zombielike beasts, and birth demons.

HOW VAMPIRES ARE CREATED

The most obvious answer to this question is that a vampire becomes a member of the undead through the bite of another vampire. While in the majority of cases that may hold true, a vampire's making is infinitely more complicated, depending on the type of vampire and whether the demon is a beast of legend, mythology, literature, or film. Some outer-space suckers, for example, draw out a human's energy by mouth-to-mouth contact rather than biting.

THE ORIGIN OF "VAMPIRE"

The term *vampire* wasn't typically used in folklore but first appeared in English references in the late 1600s. Author Katherine Ramsland notes that a description of vampires as "reanimated corpses" appeared in 1810, in *Travels of Three English Gentlemen, from Venice to Hamburg, Being the Grand Tour of Germany, in the Year 1734*.

Throughout folklore there are many varied references to the ways in which an individual could become a vampire. Candidates for the undead include children born out of wedlock, those who lead sinful or criminal lives or commit suicide, women who allow vampires to gaze upon them, and even the seventh son of a seventh son. But that's just the tip of the iceberg. Depending on the culture and its superstitions and beliefs, vampires might also be those who are born with teeth or who, like witches, possess a third nipple. Individuals who are not baptized or who are born on holy days are also at risk, as are those who practice black magic, or who die violently.

The Maker as Parent

If you are seduced by a vampire, he becomes your *maker*, or *parent*. One thing that most vampires have to learn is how much blood to take from a victim.

Taken in small doses, the blood of a victim can sustain a vampire for quite some time before she or he dies or, should the vampire choose, enters the world of the undead. The act of consuming blood is for the vampire a matter of restraint, as the action generally triggers sexual arousal and a frenzy that if not carefully controlled kills the victim.

Depending on the type of vampire, *bringing* or *crossing over* a victim—that is to say, making him or her a vampire—can have various consequences. Some new vampires gain the memories of their maker, while others are left to discover their powers and bloodlust for themselves. In Anne Rice's *Interview with the Vampire*, Louis tells of his making by Lestat's hand in 1791, describing being "weak to paralysis," in complete panic, and possessing the inability to speak. Once initiated with Lestat's blood, Louis roams free, seeing the world for the first time with preternatural eyes.

Night of the Living Dead

The majority of vampires of folklore aren't pristine, white-skinned, radiant beings. Most are reanimated corpses in various states of disarray and decay. Whether plague victim, noble, or ordinary farmer, all measure of humanity has been burned away. What links all vampires is their ability to inspire fear in humans.

Fear is a powerful element of the human psyche, one that—like a vampire—feeds off our imaginations and lies patiently waiting in the dark corners of our minds. Vampires thrive on fear and the power it gives them.

Since the vampiric creatures of lore were often hideous beasts, it's easy to see why the mere thought of them instantly evoked fear. The descriptions of them in vampire literature send chills up our spines. Silver screen vampires have arguably given us the most nightmares. To actually see a vampire in whatever form encircle its prey in a frenzied attack or design a slow macabre courtship, then watch as its fangs pierce exposed skin leaves a lasting impression. Among the many swirling tales of vampirism there run several themes that play into the

terrifying grip these malfeasants have on our psyche. These include, among other things, plagues and epidemics.

EPIDEMICS

Throughout history mankind has been burdened by all manner of epidemics, be they loss of livestock or crops, accidents, uncontrollable weather, unexplainable deaths, insane behavior, and, of course, various forms of plague. For all of those occurrences there was, and is, typically a need to place blame and take retribution. When plagues strike, the ensuing hysteria often includes accusations of paranormal or supernatural activities in order to explain the spreading sickness. People have sometimes believed that the sickness itself caused vampirism. As a result, there evolved talismans to ward off the undead. For example, airborne illnesses carried the very stench of the dying. To keep the stink at bay and repel evil demons, people would surround themselves with pungent odors such as garlic, juniper, incense, perfumes, animal manure, and even human feces.

Vampires, witches, werewolves, and all types of mythological creatures were easily blamed for epidemics, as were outcasts of society, and even children, pregnant women, and midwives. Naturopaths or other types of medicinal healers, or anyone who lived on what was then considered to be the fringe of society, often fell under suspicion. Likewise, any stranger who had the misfortune to arrive in a village around the same time people became ill would be highly suspect. In ancient times, folkloric creatures were easy to blame, for example, the Indian *bhuta* (see Chapter 6), malevolent spirits who feed on the living and dead and who appear as mist or lights, or the Ashanti *obayifo*, a West African vampire, which sucks the blood of children as well as life out of crops.

VAMPIRE PLAGUE

Bubonic plague, which is said to have begun in Asia in the 1340s and quickly spread to Europe by 1347, is thought to have wiped out one-third of the European population. Commonly called the Black Death or

Black Plague for the black gangrene in the last stage of the sickness, it is sometimes linked in folklore to vampirism. Many science fiction vampire writers and filmmakers have taken advantage of this link—for example, Richard Matheson's *I Am Legend* or the 2006 film *Ultraviolet*.

During the plagues of the Middle Ages, whether the diseases were bubonic (infecting the lymph nodes), septicemic (poisoning the blood), or pneumonic (infiltrating the lungs, therefore airborne), the undead were among those suspected of initiating the illnesses. Under such circumstances, steps were taken to identify the culprit (i.e., the earliest infected individual) and stake or burn the corpse. The body's ashes were tossed into a river or spread on consecrated ground.

“THE BLOOD IS THE LIFE”

In Stoker’s *Dracula*, Dr. Seward tells of his altercation with Renfield, who after attacking Seward with a knife and cutting his wrist, licks the blood from the floor and repeats over and over: “The blood is the life! The blood is the life!” This oft-used phrase is intrinsically linked to the vampire realm. Blood *is* what keeps us functioning, after all. It’s the elixir that’s cherished, sought after, sworn by, studied, shed, exploited, diseased, spilled, and ultimately revered for its ability to rejuvenate in both a spiritual and physical capacity. Blood can be offered or taken on many levels: as sacrifice, in absolution, in revenge, in exchange for saving a life, or to take a life. Blood has a rich history of associations, accrued from our earliest beginnings, that continue to excite the creative imagination. However, many vampires are less intent on sucking blood than they are psychic or spiritual energy. An individual’s life force, spiritual energy, and soul are all equally enticing to suckers, depending, of course, on the type of creatures they are.

Historic Symbolism

The symbolism of blood, be it spiritual, physical, scientific, religious, supernatural, or metaphorical, has existed since the earliest days of man. There are endless accounts and legends of blood rituals and sacrifices throughout history from the early pagan beliefs of eastern Europe to the ancient Mayan civilization, to centuries of warriors, tribes, practitioners of magic, serial killers, and scientists. Warriors, for example, have been known to ingest the blood of their enemies in order to increase their own power. Likewise, in the modern era, the Masai warrior tribe of Kenya exsanguinate their cows from the jugular and consume the blood with milk in the belief that it will give them extra strength.

Many deities are also associated with blood sacrifices. India’s goddess Kali (literally translated, “black” or “the black one”) is the Hindu goddess of

destruction and death and the overseer of plagues and annihilation, among other things. A female figure possessing four arms, Kali is often depicted as having fangs or a protruding tongue, and ominously sports a garland composed of decapitated heads or skulls. Her legendary battle with the demonic Raktabija, during which she speared him and drank his blood, contributes to her vampiric reputation. Worshippers of Kali often sacrifice goats in her name.

Perhaps the best-known manifestation of metaphorical blood is wine representing the blood of Christ. This particular aspect of blood symbolism is arguably the most relevant when it comes to vampires, given the underlying subtext of the vampire as the devil. The vampire's practice of usurping blood, which equates to life, is matched by its typical aversions to holy artifacts like the crucifix, holy water, churches, consecrated ground, and the Eucharist wafer, which is symbolic of Christ's body. In *Dracula* Bram Stoker likely intended to link blood's meaning to biblical sources, and many authors over the decades have followed his lead. The phrase "the blood is the life" is from Deuteronomy 12:23; the full passage reads: "Only be sure that you do not eat the blood: for the blood is the life; and you may not eat the life with the flesh." As a symbolic opponent of Heaven, Dracula uses blood as revenge against God.

“Blood alone moves the wheels of history.”

—MARTIN LUTHER, GERMAN THEOLOGIAN

Blood and Immortality

In much of history, blood is the ultimate physical manifestation of existence. Humans cannot survive without blood coursing through their veins. In folklore, and especially in the vampire realm, blood is inextricably linked to immortality. Deprived of blood, a traditional vampire as well as many other types would likely starve. This fact alone accounts for their predatory nature and plays to the vampiric creatures of folklore, many of whom—like the Greek *lamia*, Indonesian *pontianak*, Indian *rakshasa*, Ashanti *obayifo*, Malaysian *langsuiar*,

and Romanian *striga*—prey upon children, women, and pregnant women, perhaps out of revenge, or for pure survival, or in an effort to gain eternal youth and vitality. This mythology could relate to another strong symbol in the vampiric blood realm, that of menstruation, an event that would serve as a double enticement to a vampire by furthering its underlying sexual conquest.

Individuals suffering an attack from a vampiric creature typically endure several fates. In many instances, the creature sucks enough blood as to cause its victim to perish. Other victims suffer prolonged illness that eventually ends in death. At worst, the prey of vampires are turned into the undead. In literary and cinematic traditions, the ever-present aspect of vampirism as a twisted fountain of youth is often employed by vampires in an effort to assure their victims that immortality is a gift rather than a curse. Such is the case with Miriam Blaylock, Whitley Strieber's vampire protagonist in *The Hunger*.

The Need for Food

A vampire's need for sustenance is both inevitable and obsessive, and like most creatures in need of food, there must therefore be accessibility, be it from the discothèque down the block or, in the case of traditional bloodsuckers, bleeding dry the inhabitants of a nearby village, town, or city where they can feast upon those who are unlikely to be missed. In folklore many of the creatures, such as the Indian bhuta, feed on corpses, and therefore spend their time foraging graveyards and cremation sites. Many others, like the Greek lamia and other so-called birth demons, focus their undead revenge on newborn children or pregnant women. For the average vampire, meaning those who don't fall into the reluctant vampire category, blood *is* the life and must be procured no matter the risk of exposure. Modern-day vampires have a much better chance of their killings going unnoticed if victims are properly chosen and disposed of.

BLOOD-DRINKING

Although all vampires drink blood, there's no agreement on how neat or sloppy they are about it. On the television soap opera *Dark Shadows*, for instance, vampire Barnabas Collins plunged his teeth into the necks of beautiful girls and sucked without leaving a trace of red on their filmy white dresses. On the other hand, Bram Stoker describes Dracula after one of his feasts: "On the lips were gouts of fresh blood, which trickled from the corners of the mouth and ran over the chin and neck. Even the deep, burning eyes seemed set amongst swollen flesh, for the lids and pouches underneath were bloated. It seemed as if the whole awful creature were simply gorged with blood."

Whether they operate independently or in clans, vampires retain their fearsome reputation largely because of the host of eccentric, evil, and superhuman characteristics they possess. In the next chapter, we discuss the traits most prized by the fiends, including their manner of dress, physical transformations, and powers.

CHAPTER 2

Vampires' Attributes, Behavior, and Environs

WHEN YOU HEAR the word *vampire*, probably the first image that comes to mind is that of a tall, dark, handsome man with luminous eyes, clothed in a fine black tuxedo enveloped by an exquisite opera cloak. That image—put into our heads courtesy of Bela Lugosi in the 1931 classic film *Dracula*—is the perfect representation of the traditional drawing-room vampire, one so deceptively aristocratic that he melds perfectly into respectable society. By definition, though, a vampire is a reanimated corpse, or revenant, who rises from the grave to partake of the blood or flesh of the living through the use of elongated canine teeth. Often these vampiric creatures of lore are decidedly *not* the debonair likes of Christopher Lee nor the lavish and exquisite vampires of Anne Rice's imaginings. No, these are hideous corpses more in keeping with *Night of the Living Dead* or *30 Days of Night*.

As a species, vampires must be admired for their efficiency, intelligence, and self-preservation. Our fascination with them, though, is like our admiration of a tiger—it's best done from outside the cage.

FANGS, COFFINS, AND HELLSPAWN HABITS

Your idea of vampires will vary depending on what you've seen or read. A characteristic that may be prevalent in film and literature, for example, may not appear in folklore and vice versa. But all three of these disciplines play off one another and provide a complete picture. Many vampiric traits are derived from Bram Stoker's great novel. For example, the notion of sleep and resting on native soil, coffins, and transforming into mist evolve from Stoker's conception of *Dracula*. However, vampires have other features as well.

Fangs

When one thinks of vampiric figures, it's quite naturally a set of frighteningly sharp teeth that first comes to mind. After all, from a purely functional standpoint, fangs are the mechanism by which most vampires ultimately consume their food. In the traditional sense, a vampire's fangs are sharp, elongated canine teeth, which, when bared, are a gruesome and intimately brutal way to achieve sustenance. Symbolically, the biting of one's neck is a highly erotic act, which is in keeping with the vampire's portrayal as a sexual predator.

KITH OF THE VAMPIRETH

One of the few vampire-centric authors to deal realistically with what it would mean to grow a set of fangs is MaryJanice Davidson. In her hilarious series of novels about the vampire queen (and airhead) Betsy Taylor, Davidson suggests that fangs appear when vampires are in the midst of bloodlust. Unfortunately, whenever this happens to Betsy, she develops an uncontrollable lisp.

Interestingly, fangs don't often appear among the vampires of folklore; instead many of the deities and monsters use their tongue for exsanguinations. It's been suggested by some critics that fangs are a result of the crossover of

It's been suggested by some critics that fangs are a result of the crossover of vampires and werewolves in folkloric tradition.

MODERN FANGS

Individuals who consider themselves modern-day vampires or who engage in blood fetish practices sometimes wear fangs as part of their ritual. Still others file their teeth to emulate fangs or subject themselves to expensive dental work to have implants replicating fangs. For the morbidly curious, it's unlikely that dental insurance covers that procedure.

Early films such as Bela Lugosi's *Dracula* in 1931 and even the 1922 silent film *Nosferatu* didn't show Dracula actually biting the necks of his victims. Hammer Films, on the other hand, had no issue with boldly showing Christopher Lee's elongated teeth. Over the decades, both literary and celluloid bloodsuckers have punctured necks with fangs of varying sizes, leaving wounds ranging from pinpricks to holes the size of softballs. Stoker described his Dracula as having "peculiarly sharp white teeth," and later in the tale, when Lucy Westenra is first bitten, Mina describes the bite as "two little red points like pinpricks." Indeed, they were so inconspicuous that poor Mina believed she caused the wounds with a pin when securing a shawl around Lucy's neck.

In James Malcolm Rymer's 1847 penny dreadful *Varney the Vampyre*, the fiend is described as having "fearful looking teeth—projecting like those of some wild animal, hideously, glaringly white, and fang-like." In many modern-day vampire films, the monsters retain all measure of killer fangs. In the 2002 movie *Blade II*, bloodsuckers infected with a vampire virus become "Reapers," who feed indiscriminately on both the living and the undead. The lead vampire takes the ratlike features of Count Orlok, Max Schreck's *Nosferatu*, one step further.

"A tall figure is standing on the ledge immediately outside the long window. It is its fingernails upon the glass that produces the sound so like the hail, now that the hail has ceased. Intense fear paralysed the limbs of that beautiful girl. That one shriek is all she can utter—with hands clasped, a face of marble, a heart beating so wildly in her bosom, that each moment it seems as if it would break its confines, eyes distended and fixed upon the window, she waits, froze with horror. The pattering and clattering of the nails continue."

—*Varney the Vampyre* by James Malcolm Rymer

Fingernails

Orlok is the first vampire glimpsed on the silver screen; his fingernails were intentionally and abnormally long and gruesome. Other than various B-movie bloodsuckers sporting exceptionally long and hideous nails while in their transformed states, most traditional vampires are shown with long nails, usually well manicured. In Stoker's *Dracula*, Jonathan Harker says that the Count's hands had first seemed rather "white and fine" but upon closer inspection, "I could not but notice that they were rather course, broad, with squat fingers. Strange to say, there were hairs in the centre of the palm. The nails were long and fine, and cut to a sharp point." Anne Rice's preternatural creatures have fingernails that are translucent as glass.

BRING OUT YOUR DEAD!

When it comes to burial practices, customs and technology have evolved since cavemen roamed the planet. Early methods of burial didn't make use of coffins as we know them today. Instead, the dead were left to the elements, placed in caves, buried under rocks, set afire, or simply wrapped in a shroud and interred in shallow graves. Naturally, this left corpses vulnerable to the attack of the vampires of folklore like the Hindu *vetala*, a mythological spirit that lurks in burial grounds and takes possession of corpses. The practice of placing the body in a container is generally believed to have been intended to keep all creatures from disturbing the dead. No doubt the existence of cemeteries, mausoleums, and crematoriums evolved from this thinking.

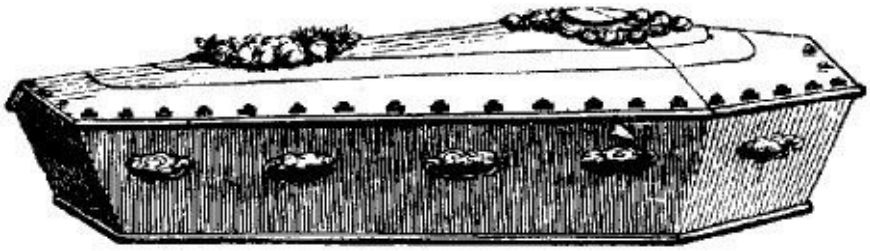
Coffins

Traditional coffins as we know them likely evolved during the 1600s. At first they were crude boxes; then increasingly there were more elaborate caskets for anyone who could afford them. By the late nineteenth century they had become commonplace. Bram Stoker used them to create a resting place for Dracula filled with the Count's native soil (see following). Other writers picked up Stoker's idea.

OUT OF THE COFFIN

Vampire aficionados will likely never forget the eerie yet slightly comical emergence of *Nosferatu's* Count Orlok from his rat-infested soil-filled coffin aboard the ship *Demeter*. In one swift movement, the stiffened vampire rises from his coffin—a maniacal unblinking mannequin from the bowels of hell itself.

As a result of requiring such specific sleeping quarters, the vampire is also restricted to lugging a coffin around wherever he or she goes. This is evident in early vampire fiction and film. Given that it's not the easiest bed to transport, the use of the coffin is one that many modern authors and filmmakers have modified, or even dropped, in their vampire sagas. Anne Rice's bloodsuckers, for example, don't require coffins; when they use them, it's more for show than substance. Instead, they simply require a dark sanctuary such a crypt, a basement, or even a place in which they can bury themselves for up to centuries at a time when hibernating, as Lestat does from 1929 to 1984 before awakening to become a brash rock star in *The Vampire Lestat*. Likewise, Whitley Strieber's vampires in his 1981 novel *The Hunger* have no aversion to daylight, and therefore slumber comfortably in beds.



Native Soil and Sleep

When it comes to sleep, the vampire, in general, is relegated to slumber just like the rest of us mere mortals, one of a vampire's few consistent vulnerabilities. The only difference is that the vampire's rest is more trancelike and affords various amounts of awareness depending on whether it's a creature of folklore, fiction, or film. That awareness is often instilled so as to give the dozing fiend a method of defense in case of an unwelcome intruder. In *Dracula*, Stoker writes of his fiend's sleep during Jonathan Harker's incarceration at Castle Dracula:

> *"There, in one of the great boxes, of which there were fifty in all, on a pile of newly dug earth, lay the Count! He was either dead or asleep. I could not*

say which, for eyes were open and stony, but without the glassiness of death, and the cheeks had the warmth of life through all their pallor. The lips were as red as ever. But there was no sign of movement, no pulse, no breath, no beating of the heart."

Vampires need rest in order to rejuvenate themselves and perhaps as a peaceful respite to fully digest their liquid lunch. Following Harker's initial discovery of the Count in his coffin, he attempts to hit Dracula with a shovel but as the shovel is about to strike, Dracula's half-open eyes fall upon Harker. The young man is terrified by their stare, and the blow merely gashes the vampire's forehead. This scene reinforces the concept of awareness during vampiric sleep and perhaps a certain measure of hypnosis.

Native Soil

Dracula, and many other vampires, must rest on their native soil. For Dracula, this is important because of his deep roots in Transylvania and his connection to its history. Yet this also seems to be a feature of many other vampires with no such roots. On the other hand, vampires cannot enter consecrated ground—that is, land that has been blessed by the Church.

While many early literary vampires made use of the concept of native soil, others did not. Neither James Malcolm Rymer's fiend Varney nor John Polidori's Lord Ruthven or even Anne Rice's Lestat and company require a coffin or the trappings of native soil. What Stoker created for Dracula was a weakness through which Van Helsing could gather his troops and search for Dracula, knowing that he could be found in one of fifty earth-filled boxes that could then be filled with Eucharist wafers to "pollute" the soil.

For some of the folkloric vampires native soil was a necessity, though the majority who were shape-shifters could easily enter and exit their grave via a hole dug in the soil. For the most part, modern-day vampires are rarely hindered by confines of native soil.

STEPPING IN SOIL

In her historical horror series, author Chelsea Quinn Yarbro—who many credit with revolutionizing vampire romance—concocted a unique way for her vampiric protagonist Count Saint-Germain and his minions to stay in touch with their roots. Rather than sleep in native soil, they place it in a hidden compartment within the heels of their shoes.

THE POWER OF HYPNOSIS

One of the more insidious and most discussed characteristics of the vampire is her ability to hypnotize victims and even create a telepathic bond with them. More often than not, the transfixed gaze of a vampire results in her victim's full cooperation in giving himself freely and fully to the fiend's formidable dark gift. In truth, it's a clever tactic. Interestingly, vampire bats use a similar effect as part of their attack. With the ability to walk upright, the bat stalks its prey, mesmerizes it, and then heads for the nearest vein, using its elongated tongue to lap up the blood.

The benefit of vampiric hypnosis is obvious—if you can will another to do your bidding, your ability to procure your food becomes infinitely easier. A compliant victim under a vampire's spell typically offers little resistance. This type of control also makes it easier for a vampire to move about society, travel, maintain living arrangements, and generally obtain whatever it is that she requires with minimal effort.

> "How do we seem to you? Do you find us beautiful, magical? Our white skin, our fierce eyes? 'Drink,' you ask me. Do you have any idea of the thing you will become?"
>
> —Louis, *Interview with the Vampire* by Anne Rice

Mind over Matter

The process of mesmerizing an individual first came to prominence with Franz Anton Mesmer during the late 1700s. The term *hypnotism* is associated

with the Greek god of sleep, Hypnos. When Bram Stoker wrote *Dracula* the "science" of hypnotism would have been known to him, and he made good use of it in his novel. During the scene in which Dracula baptizes Mina with the blood from his chest, Van Helsing declares that "Jonathan [Harker] is in a stupor such as we know the Vampire can produce." But it's Mina who's ultimately the one who establishes a mind-link to the fiend, a fact that's confirmed after Van Helsing (who along with Dr. Seward is a "student of the brain") hypnotizes Mina and learns through their telepathic link that Dracula is aboard a ship sailing for home.

SUPERHUMAN POWERS

As a physical presence, vampires are entirely intimidating. They have superhuman strength, physical agility, acute vision, a magnified sense of smell, extremely sharp hearing, the ability to hypnotize, and shape-shifting capabilities. Literature knows vampires who can fly, levitate, become invisible, time-travel, start fires, employ telekinesis, use telepathy, self-heal, move with extreme speed, cast spells, withstand sunlight, or even cause spontaneous combustion.

Strength

One of the characteristics common to most vampires is superhuman strength coupled with extreme physical agility. After all, they need those abilities in order to overpower their prey, fight attackers, and elude capture. In the Hammer films, for example, it's quite common to see Christopher Lee tossing an attacker across the room with the strength of a dozen men. More modern-day vampires such as those in *Blade*, Violet in *Ultraviolet*, and Selene and her kind in *Underworld* possess not only otherworldly strength, but also the ability to perform *Matrix*-like jumps and acrobatics across great heights and distances. Still other vampires are able to spend some time in daylight, though their powers may be greatly reduced. Stoker's Dracula also had the ability to scale walls like Spiderman, a tradition carried on by Gary Oldman's homage in the 1992 *Dracula*. Romance novelist Linda Lael Miller's bloodsuckers have the freedom to time-travel at will, while some of Anne Rice's ancient vampires have, in addition to strength, the gift of flight, and in the case of Akasha, Maharet, and Marius, to name a few, the ability to set things and people on fire.

SEE, SMELL, HEAR

Given that traditional vampires are creatures of the night who have an extreme aversion to sunlight, it would only make sense that they would

possess extraordinary night vision superior to mortals. Some say this relates to the acute vision possessed by bats and wolves. In addition, they often have a heightened sense of smell and hearing.

The Mist

In the 1931 film *Dracula*, Mina describes to her husband John Harker a terrible dream she had, and that when the dream came: “It seemed the whole room was filled with mist. It was so thick, I could just see the lamp by the bed, a tiny spark in the fog. And then I saw two red eye staring at me and a white livid face came down out of the mist.” In the same film, Renfield describes a similar encounter: “A red mist spread over the lawn, coming on like a flame of fire. And then he parted it, and I could see that there were thousands of rats with their eyes blazing red like his only smaller.” The two scenes brilliantly illustrate the apparent concept that Dracula possesses the ability to become mist—a power that preys upon our debilitating fear of that which we cannot lay eyes upon. Who knows what lurks within the fog? And worse yet, how easy is it for the mists to creep under doorways and seep through small cracks and crevices?

BLOOD FOR HEALTH

The term *sanguinarian*, which originates from the Latin word *sanguineus*—meaning bloody, reddish, or bloodthirsty—refers to an individual who believes he requires the ingestion of blood to retain proper health. Sanguinarian vampires are part of an alternate lifestyle subculture that practices blood consumption.

The use of mist as a harbinger of evil has been used in both literature and an abundance of films. In Stoker’s *Dracula*, the doomed ship *Demeter*, carrying the vampire onboard, became awash with mist, and Van Helsing himself asserted that “he can come in mist which he create, that noble ship’s captain proved him

of this, but, from what we know, the distance he can make this mist is limited, and it can only be round himself." In *Dracula*, it's Mina who's most plagued by the mist. While safely stowed in Dr. Seward's quarters, she writes that during what she perceives to be a dream she notices a white mist creeping toward the house with "almost perceptible slowness," a whirling mist that enters her room forming a cloudy pillar with lights that "seemed to shine on me through the fog like two red eyes." Sadly for Mina, that wouldn't be the last time the fiend appeared to her by means of mist.

There's no doubt that Stoker made great use of mist as one of Dracula's powers, but he wasn't the originator of the idea. Creatures of lore and legend were often tracked and identified by means of grave markers and any unusual characteristics of their final resting place. In some cases, the sign of a vampire would be suspected if small holes were noticed around a burial site, indicating that an evil creature had the means to become mist and move freely in and out of its grave without disturbing it.

Altering Weather

Many superstitions and rituals throughout history have been based on controlling or predicting weather. In the vampire realm, controlling weather has little to do with superstition. In truth, Stoker's study of superstitions is likely what caused him to make mention of Dracula's ability to alter weather patterns, an ability that's shown up in a number of vampire films such as Coppola's *Bram Stoker's Dracula* in 1992.

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

It's a logical assumption that Bram Stoker came across the word *Dracul* as part of his research of Transylvania and learned of Prince Vlad Dracul and his son Vlad the Impaler, aka Vlad Dracula. *Dracul*, meaning "dragon," would seem an apropos name for a predatory preternatural mythical creature who can fly. One also has to wonder how coincidental it was that protagonist Van Helsing bears the name of the author—Abraham—its shortened version being Bram. In an attempt at trickery, the name Alucard (Dracula spelled backward) has also been used on numerous occasions. This was used by Lon Chaney Jr. in the 1943 film *Son of Dracula* as well as other films including *Dracula a.d. 1972*, and the animated *Hellsing* trilogy. Author Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu employed a similar tactic to his vampiric lesbian ingénue Carmilla, who is also known as Countess Mircalla Karnstein.

ESTABLISHING A LAIR

Being a successful vampire requires a well-honed survival instinct, and where residence is concerned, the same principles that apply to humans apply to vampires: location, location, location. As well, trusted servants, proper lodging that traditionally includes native soil stuffed in a coffin or crate, and a top-of-the-line security system are desirable. Of course, that elaborate setup is for the more affluent bloodsucker. For the average vampire, or one who's always on the move—or in case of emergency—a creepy old crypt, mausoleum, cemetery, or abandoned building is fine. In the television series *Forever Knight*, for example, detective Nick Knight makes use of the trunk of his car if the coming dawn finds him far from home.

Servants and Security

In *Dracula*, the mad Renfield is Dracula's servant, controlled by the vampire's mind. When the evil fiend arrives in England, Renfield mutters to himself, "He is coming!" In the decades that followed *Dracula*'s publication, the character of Renfield has alternately been downplayed or highlighted. Sometimes in cinema, it's Renfield rather than Harker who travels to Castle Dracula and becomes Dracula's servant, and the one who brings him to London on the *Demeter*.

TRAVELING BY COFFIN

In the majority of fictional works and films, a vampire's servants help to arrange travel, monitor security, and in some cases help to lure the unwary fly to the web of a famished fiend. Travel is, of course, of great concern to the traditional vampire, as many such as Dracula are hindered by water or lack of their native soil.

Since it's difficult for servants to remain unaware of their master's vampire

Since it's difficult for servants to remain unaware of their master's vampire nature—the lack of conventional food consumption and sleeping during daylight hours are two giveaways—it's better for a vampire to maintain a staff that knows what's what. Of course, the vampire can always put servants under hypnosis or, in some cases, use them as an occasional snack so as to retain their zombielike state.

Many vampires in both fiction and film have human companions who are well aware of their condition. In the case of most vampire romance novels, such as Stephenie Meyer's young adult tales, there are often human/vampire romantic connections. In *Forever Knight,* Nick's coroner friend Natalie is in the know, despite the fact his second partner Tracy *doesn't* know that Nick is undead. Ironically she is in love with one of Nick's undead compatriots and is well aware her lover is a vampire. MaryJanice Davidson's vampire queen, Betsy Taylor, has several friends in her household who are mortal but know their housemate drinks blood. From a writing or filmmaking point of view the complications and love stories that arise from having the two species intermingle makes for a more interesting story line—one that usually ends brilliantly or with a lot of blood.

DRESSING THE PART

For most of us, the mere mention of the word *vampire* conjures up the traditional Dracula ensemble of a black tux and/or tails, a long opera cloak, and the occasional hint of red. While this image of Dracula is almost entirely attributed to Irish playwright Hamilton Deane and his 1924 stage adaptation of Stoker's novel, it has also been set in stone by a number of films, not the least of which is Bela Lugosi's *Dracula*. Whether he's known as a count or prince, the mere designation of Dracula as royalty—as with many other fictional and celluloid vampires—lends itself to his wearing attire befitting an aristocrat.

Fiendish Fashion

In literature, especially in historical horror and vampire romance, that trend continues, with vampires ranging from Count Saint-Germain to Lestat costuming themselves in the styles of their era, as any intelligent undead predator would do in order to blend in with the general public. Some vampires, however, refuse to go with the flow. Anne Rice's Marius, for example, wears rich velvet jackets no matter the era. Where vampires tend to become more specialized in their attire is on film. In the *Underworld* films, Kate Beckinsale's Selene is a cool drink of water in her black skintight leather unitard and long coat with accentuated capelike flow. In *Ultraviolet*, Milla Jovovich does her comic book alter ego justice with her instantly interchangeable slick attire and hair colors reminiscent of Sydney Bristow in the TV series *Alias*. Even Van Helsing has rolled with the fashion punches. In the 2004 film *Van Helsing*, dashing protagonist Hugh Jackman is fabulously clad in an ensemble harkening back to the heroes of the Wild West, with a black hat and a long black leather coat and duster.

A BITING MOTH

For those who have an aversion to vampire bats, here's one more thing to give you the willies. Meet *Calyptra thalictri*, otherwise known as the vampire moth. No lie. It's said that a bite from the moth fills the moth's stomach with human blood, leaving swelling and pain in its wake. No doubt a bug zapper might help drive off the latest and greatest in vampiric predators.

Why a Cape?

One of the most instantly recognizable traits of the vampire, aside from the gleaming blood-dripping fangs, is its cape. Typically long, heavy, and black with the occasional red lining, the cape is highly symbolic in its representation of the bat. As previously mentioned, the adding of a cape to the Dracula persona is the brainchild of playwright Hamilton Deane, who no doubt felt that such a cloaked gentleman fiend would make for great impact in theatrical performances. He was spot on. The cape has become an iconic part of the Dracula legend, its long fabric allowing him to move with ease and giving rise to one of the vampire's most famed positions—that of pulling the cape up to his face and over his head so as to completely hide himself and blend into the shadows. It's a brilliant concept made more permanent by Bela Lugosi's performance onstage in 1927 and in the 1931 film.

ANIMAL INSTINCTS

The vampires and vampiric creatures of folklore are a decidedly mixed bag of humans, zombies, animals, and various hybrids and mutants. In many ways, the creatures of lore are more primal in their conception and definitely more animalistic in their hunting and killing of victims than vampires turned from humans. While vampires are often associated with a number of different animals, among them cats, dogs, birds, and various insects, they are most commonly linked to bats and wolves. And while many animals can become vampires, they can also be used to combat vampires. Crows, wolves, and even horses are used in graveyards to locate a vampire's resting place.

Going Batty

It's no small mystery that the vampire bat is associated with the legendary bloodsucker. As luck would have it, there's a good reason for that. There are three species of vampire bat from the Desmodontidae subfamily and *Desmodus* and *Diphylla* genuses of the Phyllostomidae family of leaf-nosed bats: the common *Desmodus rufus*, the *Desmodus rotundus*, and *Diphylla ecaudata*. Primarily found in areas in Central and South America and a few areas of the southern United States, the vampire bat is small in size but bears a particularly frightening appearance that helps its feeding habits. It has an erect stance, large eyes, teeth that are incredibly sharp, and a lower lip possessing a cleft. As

mentioned earlier, it is indeed a blood drinker with tactics similar to that of a vampire, in that it feeds at ground level and attempts to hypnotize its prey before attacking a vein and lapping up blood with a long tongue. With saliva containing an anticoagulant, the bat is able to keep blood flowing until it's sated. Like vampires, these bats must maintain blood intake or face rapid deterioration.

The bat has appeared in legend and lore for centuries but didn't become famous until Bram Stoker brought it to the forefront. Stoker made free use of the bat in *Dracula*, as it appeared at the windows of Renfield and Lucy Westenra. Subsequently appearing in Bela Lugosi's 1931 *Dracula*, it quickly became one of the most definitive icons of the vampire.

Hungry Like the Wolf

In Chapter 2 of *Dracula*, when Jonathan Harker sits with the Count after his arrival at Castle Dracula, there is, in the background, the sound of wolves howling. "Listen to them," murmurs the Count. "The children of the night. What music they make!" Dracula's almost gleeful acknowledgment of the wolves is a devilish way of paying homage to folkloric beasts while also hinting at his ability to become a wolf himself.

WHERE WOLF?

One possible explanation for accounts of individuals becoming werewolves is the fungus *ergot*, which most commonly pollutes rye, barley, and wheat crops. During medieval times these were the grains typically used in bread. One of the common byproducts of ergot is that it can cause convulsions, psychosis, and hallucinations. Experts have speculated that contaminated bread is a possible explanation for alleged lycanthropy and even the hysteria of the Salem witch trials.

Like witches, vampires and lycanthropes, or werewolves, have also been connected in lore, fiction, and certainly film. As predators that bear an affliction

that gives them the ability to shape-shift, both vampires and werewolves are consumed by many of the same urges and challenges in their quest for survival. They are, after all, hunted beasts. The Slavic interpretation of the vampiric Greek *vrykolakas* is that of a wolf. Throughout history there have also been many documented accounts of werewolves.

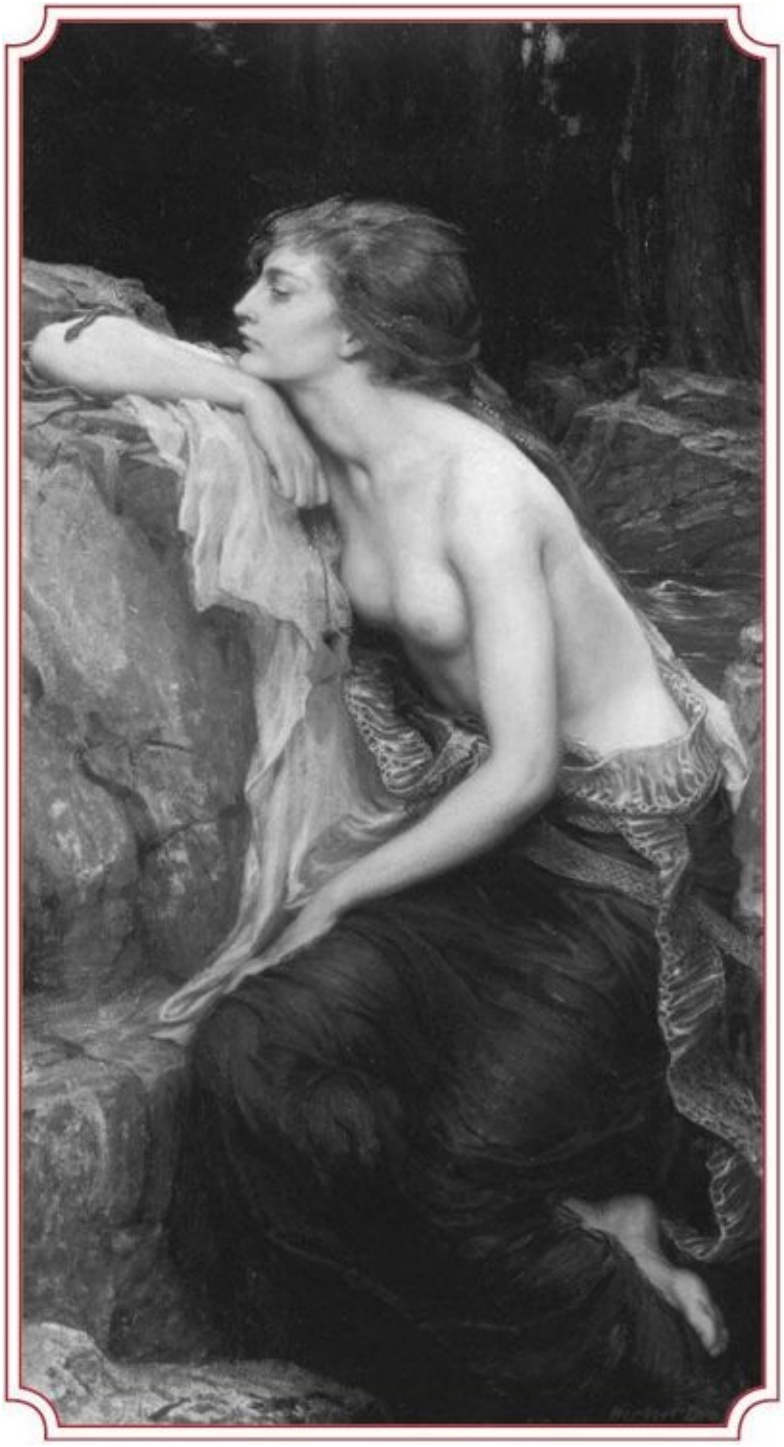
"I'm not afraid of werewolves or vampires or haunted hotels, I'm afraid of what real human beings do to other real human beings."

—WALTER JON WILLIAMS, AMERICAN AUTHOR

Let's now turn to the characteristics of vampires from different parts of the world.

PART 2

VAMPIRES FROM AROUND THE WORLD



Lamia by Herbert James Draper, 1909

CHAPTER 3

Greek and Slavic Vampires

WHEN WE LOOK for the first signs of vampires in our culture, our eyes turn to the East, to the culture of ancient Greece, and to the Slavic people who swept over the mountains of Central Europe and spread their legends across the land.

GREEK VAMPIRES

While most of us are familiar with the mythological gods of ancient Greece, it's less well known that according to legend, it was those same all-powerful deities who bred the creatures who would become the ancestors of vampires throughout the folklore of European history. Not surprising to vampire aficionados, it was Zeus, the supreme god of Greek mythology, who was responsible for the creation of one of the earliest life-sucking demons in history—and he did it by fooling around with another woman.

ANCIENT BLOODSUCKERS

When we discuss the gods, demons, and religion of Greek mythology, it's helpful to remember that to the ancient Greeks these "legends" had nothing to do with fiction or fantasy. We have the benefit of science, education, and a healthy dose of skepticism, but the Greeks, like the ancient Egyptians, believed in the existence of their gods and their supernatural designs for humankind with as much conviction as any modern believer does in his own choice of religion and deity.

The Lamia

The writings and legends of ancient Greeks, including references from Aristophanes and Aristotle, tell the tale of an illicit love affair between the all-powerful Zeus and the Libyan princess Lamia, who's variously described as the daughter of the sea god Poseidon or a daughter of Poseidon's son, Belus. This celestial fling attracted the wrath of Hera, Zeus's jealous wife, who took vengeance upon the unfortunate Lamia by kidnapping and killing all of her God-spawned children and driving the bereft woman into exile.

Grief-stricken and unable to retaliate against the power of the gods who'd brought her such misery, Lamia began exacting revenge upon humankind by stealing and sucking the life from the babies of mortal mothers. In later legendary incarnations, Lamia evolved into a legion of unearthly beings with the upper bodies of women and the lower shapes of serpents. These creatures are called *lamiae*, and they suck the blood of children. They can also alter their horrific appearances at will to seduce young men and lead them to ruin or death.

"Everyone kind of likes a vampire story because it almost could be true."

—Bill Nighy, English actor

Empusa and Mormo

The Greek pantheon included a number of now-obscure minor deities, including Empusa and Mormo. The former (her name, possibly, means "one legged") was a shape-shifter who drank blood, in particular the blood of young men. She was, thus, a type of succubus. In early versions of the myth, she is the daughter of the goddess Hecate, but later she became a kind of generic monster that preyed on unwary travelers.

Mormo, of a somewhat similar origin, bit bad children and thus became, apparently, a stock figure in Greek nursery tales.

The Cretan Shepherd and the Vampire

The following story by Charles Dickens Jr., son of the famous novelist, appeared in the journal *All the Year Round* in 1871:

“Mr. Pashley, in his Travels in Crete, states that when he was at the town of Askylo, he asked about the vampires or katakhanadhes, as the Cretans called them of whose existence and doings he had heard many recitals, stoutly corroborated by the peasantry. Many of the stories converged towards one central fact, which Mr. Pashley believed had given origin to them all.

On one occasion a man of some note was buried at St. George’s Church at Kalikrati, in the island of Crete. An arch or canopy was built over his grave. But he soon afterwards made his appearance as a vampire, haunting the village, and destroying men and children.

A shepherd was one day tending his sheep and goats near the church, and on being caught in a shower, went under the arch to seek shelter from the rain. He determined to pass the night there, laid aside his arms, and stretched himself on a stone to sleep. In placing his fire-arms down (gentle shepherds of pastoral poems do not want fire-arms; but the Cretans are not gentle shepherds), he happened to cross them.

Now this crossing was always believed to have the effect of preventing a vampire from emerging from the spot where the emblem was found. Thereupon occurred a singular debate. The vampire rose in the night, and requested the shepherd to remove the fire-arms in order that he might pass, as he had some important business to transact.

The shepherd, inferring from this request that the corpse was the identical vampire which had been doing so much mischief, at first refused his assent; but on obtaining from the vampire a promise on oath that he would not hurt him, the shepherd moved the crossed arms. The vampire, thus enabled to rise, went to a distance of about two miles, and killed two persons, a man and a woman. On his return, the shepherd saw some indication of what had occurred, which caused the vampire to threaten him with a similar fate if he divulged what he had seen. He courageously told all, however.

The priests and other persons came to the spot next morning, took up the corpse (which in daytime was as lifeless as any other) and burnt it. While burning, a little spot of blood spurted on the shepherd's foot, which instantly withered away; but otherwise no evil resulted, and the vampire was effectually destroyed. This was certainly a very peculiar vampire story; for the coolness with which the corpse and the shepherd carried on their conversation under the arch was unique enough. Nevertheless, the persons who narrated the affair to Mr. Pashley firmly believed in its truth, although slightly differing in their versions of it."

The Vrykolakas

In Greece, the most ancient of the demons with vampiric tendencies are directly tied to the supernatural world of spirits sired by the gods, but soon after Greece's conversion to Christianity it became clear that demons and the recently deceased were often one and the same. In modern terms, the dead who return to life are revenants, and in Greece, they're known as *vrykolakas*. Although there are various spellings of the term and variations of the word itself throughout regions of Greece, the vrykolakas are generally considered to be the most virulent demons of the undead, who return to life to cause misery to the living.

The belief in vrykolakas was, in fact, so prevalent that the Greek Orthodox Church was compelled to address the issue in the first century to help allay the fears of the populace and offer solutions to the suspected mischief of the wandering undead. It's no great surprise that the Church offered the opinion that those most likely to return from the dead had perished before receiving proper clerical rites, including stillborn children, those who'd led sinful lives or were excommunicated, and in a bizarre twist, those born on a holy day—no doubt because of the blasphemy of competing with days devoted to the saints.

The long litany of possible reasons for the creation of vrykolakas was, in many ways, a stern admonition from the Church for its followers to toe the lines of religious devotion or suffer the hideous consequences. The Church's

common-sense solution to the vrykolakas was to dig up the body of the suspected troublemaker and burn the remains to ash, a remedy that would mollify a nervous population for centuries.

VAMPIRES AND WEREWOLVES

The word *vrykolakas* trickled into common Greek usage from the southern Slavic people of the Balkans. The term originally developed from descriptions of wearers of wolf pelts and gradually evolved into a description of demons with wolflike characteristics. Although the Greek interpretation of vrykolakas was essentially vampiric in nature, variations of the same term were used by the Slavs to describe the equally frightful werewolves.

Love and Pain, or *Vampire*, by Edvard Munch, *c*. 1895

SLAVIC VAMPIRES

Although the early Slavs didn't create a rich written history, they would become some of the chief bearers of lore that would eventually creep into western Europe and eventually into our worst nightmares. The Slavic people inhabited the area now taken up by Slovakia, the Czech Republic, Belarus, Russia, Ukraine, Bosnia, Bulgaria, Croatia, Montenegro, and Serbia. From these regions, vampiric legends would multiply.

One peculiarity of vampire myths of eastern Europe is that Slavic vampires can transform not only into bats but also into butterflies.

VAMPIRES BY ANOTHER NAME

Among the names used for vampires in eastern Europe are:

- Kukudhi (Albania)
- Lampir, tenatz (Montenegro)
- Opyri, vipir (Bulgaria)
- Vukodlak, prikosac (Croatia)
- Nosophoros (Greece)
- Vampir (Hungary)
- Upierczi (Russia)
- Vampyres (Serbia)
- Upyr (Ukraine)

The Upir and Nelapsi

The mainstays of rural Slovakian and Czech vampire folklore are known as *upir* or the similar *nelapsi*, both of which are the revived and rotting corpses of the recently deceased. The upir is believed to be particularly troublesome

because it’s thought to have two hearts and two souls, and will suck the blood from its victims, often suffocating them with a crushing embrace. What’s worse, the upir not only can spread deadly disease but also can kill with a glance from its evil eye. According to one report in the early 1700s, the people in a Bohemian village of what is now the Czech Republic drove a stake into the corpse of a suspected upir. The hideous creature merely laughed and thanked them for giving him a stick to fight off pesky dogs. The startled villagers quickly solved their vampiric dilemma by burning the corpse.

Pijavica

In Croatia there are stories of creatures called *pijavica*, born from the body of one who has led an evil life or has been conceived in an incestuous union. Like most vampires elsewhere, pijavica can be combatted with garlic and fire, though wine is also an effective repellent. When in their coffins, the creatures can be killed by an iron stake through the heart. Also from Croatia come legends of the *mora*, a female vampire who drinks the blood of males. These creatures often appear not only in obvious places such as graveyards but at crossroads and bridges.

THE FIRST VAMPIRE

In 1672 in Croatia, a vampire in the village of Kringa was giving locals much trouble. He was the spirit of a peasant from the area who returned from the dead and began to drink the blood of his fellow peasants. In this instance, a stake through the heart failed to dispose of him, and the villagers had to cut off the vampire’s head before he was successfully vanquished. The case was noted in 1689 by the Slovene geographer Janez Vajkard Valvasor and is the first recorded case of vampirism in European history. Today, it is commemorated by the Vampir coffee bar in the center of town.

“But first, on earth as vampire sent,
Thy corse shall from its tomb be rent,
Then ghastly haunt thy native place,
And suck the blood of all thy race.

There from thy daughter, sister, wife,
At midnight drain the stream of life,
Yet loathe the banquet which perforce
Must feed thy livid living corse.

Thy victims ere they yet expire
Shall know the demon for their sire,
As cursing thee, thou cursing them,
Thy flowers are withered on the stem.”

—*THE GIAOUR* BY GEORGE GORDON, LORD BYRON

GYPSIES AND VAMPIRE LORE

Gypsies is the name given to the Romani people (in the mistaken belief that they came from Egypt), who originated in Northern India and spread across much of Europe. In their nomadic wanderings, they helped spread vampire legends, including some from Indian folklore, such as that of the fearsome vampire Kali. She was known among the Gypsies as Sara or the Black Goddess. Another Gypsy vampire, the

mullo, returned from the grave to suck the blood of a relative who had not observed proper burial rites.

The Hungarian Vampir

Among the most common legends of Hungarian folklore are tales of the *vampir*, a deceased human who returns to life from the grave, maintaining every physical evidence of its former existence as a perfectly healthy human. So convincing was this rejuvenation that vampirs could safely move to areas where they weren't known and live a seemingly anonymous but normal existence by day, and create havoc with the living by night. An unusual aspect of the Bulgarian myth is the orthodox religious perspective that the dead are believed to spend forty days after their passing with their guardian angel traveling to the places they'd known in life before moving on to the spiritual world. If proper burial procedures weren't followed to the letter, the dead would be unable to find their way to the next life and would remain on earth as vampires. Other reasons for a probable vampiric rebirth are a life of sinful behavior or drunkenness, or even a sudden and violent death.

VAMPIRE CHILDREN

A unique addition to Bulgarian vampire lore are *ustrels*, which are created from the souls of children born on Saturdays who pass away before being baptized. It's believed that the ustrel, in the invisible form of a spirit, can claw its way out of the grave to drain the blood from livestock and hide behind the horns or hind legs of its prey. The ustrel myth provides a seemingly logical explanation for a sudden loss of sheep and cattle to indeterminate causes and helps foster widespread belief in a variety of vampiric beings.

Vampire Skeleton Uncovered

In September 2013 archaeologists digging at the medieval complex of Perperikon in southern Bulgaria discovered the skeleton of a man with an iron stake driven through his heart. The skeleton, which has been dated to sometime in the thirteenth or fourteenth century, also had bronze coins placed between its teeth. It's not clear if the man was already a vampire when he was staked or if his family simply wished to prevent the possibility of him rising as one of the undead. The previous year two other vampire corpses were found in Sozòpol on the Black Sea, these dating from the eighth or ninth century.

Historians have suggested that the body of the man from Perperikon may have died during the Black Death, which swept over Europe in the fourteenth century, killing up to a third of the population. Decomposition of the body may have made his corpse appear as if it were alive, and his relatives wanted to take no chances on him coming back as a vampire.

The Bosnian Lampir

The incarnation of the vampire in Bosnia is the *lampir*, which is thought primarily to be the harbinger of epidemics. With no scientific understanding of the reasons or cures for deadly contagious diseases, the first to fall ill and perish is assumed to be at fault. The lampir crawls from its grave as a hideously rotting

and disease-ridden corpse for the sole purpose of infecting and bringing grief to those who subsequently succumb and die of disease. It was reported that after the Austrians gained control of Bosnia from the Ottoman Empire in 1878 that the practice of exhuming and burning the corpses of suspected lampirs was widespread in the region—a practice of which the new regime took a decidedly dim view.

The Russian Uppyr

As with many demonic legends throughout Europe, the Russian vampire, known as the *uppyr*, is closely linked to behavior that runs counter to religious piousness, and virtually anyone who is branded a heretic or who strays outside the teachings of the Russian Orthodox Church is viewed as a prime candidate for vampirism. As with virtually all of the vampires of European lore, the uppyr is the decaying, reanimated remains of the dead who refused to stay buried. The first written report of vampiric behavior was directed toward a wayward priest in 1078, about a century after Russia adopted Christianity, and this became the documented genesis of religious connotations that remained entrenched in vampire lore for centuries. It's interesting to note that practitioners of witchcraft or sorcery—in themselves highly suspect activities—could also become vampires. The implications were clear in the documentation that any activity outside the auspices of the Church would set one up for a ghastly vampiric fate.

CHAPTER 4
Romanian and German Vampires

"I have had a long talk with the Count. I asked him a few questions on Transylvania history, and he warmed up to the subject wonderfully. In his speaking of things and people, and especially of battles, he spoke as if he had been present at them all."

—JONATHAN HARKER, *DRACULA* BY BRAM STOKER

ROMANIAN VAMPIRES

Although Slavic folklore can be generally credited with the initial development of vampires as the source of virtually every natural calamity that could fall upon a society in the first millennia in eastern Europe, the Slavs also greatly influenced the legends of their non-Slavic neighbors. Of these, Romania is unquestionably the best known and is inextricably linked to the lore of vampirism in Europe, primarily as a result of Bram Stoker's *Dracula* and the light his novel cast on the often horrific activities of Dracula's alleged real-life inspirational genesis, Romania's Vlad the Impaler. Although Romania has throughout the centuries been bordered by the Slavic regions of what are now Bulgaria, Serbia, Moldova, and the Ukraine, many of Romania's earliest political and social ties were with its Hungarian neighbors to the west. Despite this amalgam of political and cultural sway, Romania has historically maintained its association with the ancient Roman Empire—which is the very namesake of Romania.

THE CAVE WITH BONES

Perhaps the long and deeply rooted sense of history that permeates the cultural folklore of Romania is best exemplified by the "Cave with Bones," discovered by a team of cave specialists in the Carpathian Mountains of southwestern Romania in 2002. Radiocarbon dating revealed that human remains recovered from the cave system were over 40,000 years old, making them the oldest ever found in Europe.

The region of eastern Europe that is now Romania was conquered by the Roman emperor Trajan in a.d. 106, and it remained a province of Rome known as *Roman Dacia* for nearly two centuries. Geographically isolated from direct Roman influence, the people of Roman Dacia, a commingling of the native

population and Roman colonists, developed a powerful independent sensibility. After the fall of Roman power in the third century, the people of Romania survived invasions of Goths, Huns, and Ottoman Turks, and the rule of Austria-Hungary. Through centuries of cultural and political incursions, the Romanians have continued to retain their fierce independence and national identity. They also retain their vampiric legends.

> “I read that every known superstition in the world is gathered into the horseshoe of the Carpathians, as if it were the centre of some sort of imaginative whirlpool.”
>
> —Jonathan Harker, *Dracula* by Bram Stoker

Vlad Tepes

The most famous son of Romania was the Wallachian prince Vlad Tepes, also known as Vlad III and Vlad Dracula (1431–1476). He was also referred to by chroniclers as Vlad the Impaler because of his habit of impaling the living bodies of his captured enemies on stakes. Despite this ghastly reputation (or perhaps because of it), he became a national hero to the people of Transylvania for his heroic stand against invading Turkish armies. Vlad held the throne at a time of expanding Turkish influence in the Balkans, following the fall of Constantinople in 1453. During 1462, Vlad fought a series of battles against the Turks and decisively defeated them in the Night Battle (during which, it is reported, 15,000 Turks were killed).

But Vlad became internationally famous when Bram Stoker decided to use his name, Dracula, as that of the vampire king in his 1897 novel. Since then, tourists have flocked to the Borgo Pass, where Dracula’s coach met the young solicitor, Jonathan Harker. And while Castle Dracula in the novel is entirely fictitious, that

hasn’t stopped vampirophiles from trying to nail down its location.

Vlad the Impaler

ORIGINS OF “DRACULA”

The Order of the Dragon was an organization of knights founded at the beginning of the fifteenth century to battle against the Muslim Turks. Vlad II, who entered the order in 1431, was named Dracul, or Dragon, because of his bravery. He passed this name down to his son, Vlad III, also known as Vlad the Impaler.

The Strigoi

Despite the influences of Slavic vampire legend, the lore of vampires in Romania has maintained its own distinction in terminology and practice. In the Romanian principality of Transylvania, vampirism actually pulled double duty as the indistinguishable living vampire, *strigoi viu*, and as the dead vampire, the

strigoi mort, which is thought to leave its tomb and take the form of an animal to haunt and harass the living. The term *strigoi* (also spelled *strigoii*) is taken from the word *striga*, or witch, an entity that is doomed to become a vampire after death. In legend, the association between witches and vampires is clear, with the strigoi viu and strigoi mort believed to gather at night to plot against the living. The strigoi mort are the deadliest of the Romanian vampires, and they will return from the grave to suck the life blood of their families and livestock before moving on to attack neighbors in their village.

As is common throughout eastern European lore, candidates for a Romanian vampiric rebirth are those who lead sinful lives or commit suicide. It's also believed that a pregnant woman who permits a vampire to look at her will subsequently give birth to another vampire, but there's little evidence as to exactly how a woman would know that she's indeed fallen under a vampiric gaze. In Romania, the prime revenant contenders are children born out of wedlock, those born with a caul (the amniotic membrane of birth that sometimes clings stubbornly to a baby's head), and children who die before baptism. Other legends have it that the seventh son of a seventh son or the seventh child of the same sex can also be born as vampires.

ROMANIAN VAMPIRES ON SCREEN

In Francis Ford Coppola's 1992 blockbuster *Bram Stoker's Dracula*, Gary Oldman as Prince Vlad in his youthful incarnation pays homage to Romanian lore in his first encounter with Mina Murray (Winona Ryder) in London. At a viewing of a cinematograph, a white wolf wreaks havoc and gets loose. Cornering Mina, Vlad subdues the wolf by yelling "Strigoi!"

The Albanian Shtriga

Just as legends of Romanian vampirism take many of their cues from Slavic folklore, the southeastern European nation of Albania has also adopted a similar approach to the undead. As with Romania, the Albanian *shtriga* possesses witchlike characteristics. The term *shtriga*, which evolves from the Latin *strix*, or "screech owl," describes a demonic flying creature of the night. The shtriga is believed to be a witch who behaves normally during daylight hours, but who at night will transform into an airborne insect, such as a fly or moth, and attack victims to drink their blood.

According to legend, a shtriga can be identified by a communal gathering inside a church, in which crosses of pig bones are attached to the doorways. The shtriga will be unable to exit past the makeshift crucifixes, and is thus recognized. Another dead giveaway is to follow a suspected shtriga after sunset until she vomits the blood of her victims. A coin can then be soaked in the regurgitated blood, creating an effective charm against further attacks.

GERMANIC VAMPIRES

The vampires of Germany owe their heritage to the Slavic vampires of eastern Europe largely because of Slavic incursions into eastern Germany in the tenth century. The best-known incarnation of vampires in northern Germany are the *nachzehrer*, or *after-eaters*, who return from the dead after gnawing on their own extremities and clothing, presenting to the living who happen across them a hideous *Night of the Living Dead* image of partially eaten hands and arms. The nachzehrer are often accompanied by the animated corpses of women who've died during childbirth and who help the ghastly vampires attack and devour their living victims.

Although the nachzehrer are believed to be the reanimated result of suicide victims or those who've suffered sudden, inexplicable deaths, a more unusual cause is thought to be the recently deceased who've been buried with their names attached to their clothing. The southern Germanic equivalent of the nachzehrer is the *blutsauger*, which translates into the creepy self-descriptive term *bloodsucker*.

"There was one great tomb more lordly than all the rest; huge it was, and nobly proportioned. On it was but one word, DRACULA."

—Dr. Van Helsing, *Dracula* by Bram Stoker

The Alp

One of the most insidious and inconsistent night creatures in Germanic folklore is the *alp*, which takes on a variety of ghoulish characteristics depending

on the region of Germany in which it appears. In some areas, the alp is a sorcerer capable of assuming the form of a bird or cat in order to work its mischief. In other areas, it's a sexual predator in human form who attacks women and girls in their beds as they sleep. Alps are also closely associated with witchcraft, and are suspected of being cats or rodents who do the nighttime bidding of witches. One of the more common abilities of alps is their power to enter the thoughts of sleeping victims and create horrific nightmares, often resulting in convulsions and fits of hysteria. A common sign of a midnight alp attack is awakening with a sudden, crushing pressure on one's chest and an intense feeling of being suffocated. That same sensation is often described by those attacked by vampiric revenants. The corpses of alps who are thought to have risen from the dead are removed from their graves and ceremoniously burned to ashes. If the mischievous alp is deemed a living witch, she's sought out and "blooded," with a ritual cut above the right eye to destroy her evil powers.

Vampyre und das Gespenst des Alpes by Friedrich Voigt Leipzig, 1854

SHROUD EATER

SHROUD EATER

A variation of the Germanic alp is the *schrattl*, a vicious vampire born of a human corpse that has eaten away at its funerary shroud and risen from the grave. Schrattls attack their families and livestock first, and then move on to harass the rest of the community, often driving their victims to insanity. The schrattls are also similar to vampires in eastern Europe in that they are held responsible for the spread of disease.

Woodwives

Generally thought to be protectors of their forested habitats, *woodwives* have the characteristics of benign fairies in many historic German legends and are said to be elegantly dressed in flowing robes. On a more gruesome note, they are also perfectly capable of attacking and ripping out the throats of hunters and woodcutters who venture deep into the woods. The ravaged bodies of forest wanderers that were sometimes found near trails leading into the deep woods were generally assumed to be victims of woodwives who'd taken offense at their incursions.

CHAPTER 5

Vampires of the United Kingdom

ALTHOUGH TALES OF vampirism in the United Kingdom in modern times concentrate primarily on the popular eastern European bloodsuckers, during the eleventh and twelfth centuries the British Isles developed their own ghoulish mythologies.

THE WELSH HAG

The *hag* in Welsh folklore is a female demon who can take on the form of a young maiden, a mature matron, or an ugly old crone. The old crone is the most feared because she signifies impending death and ruin, and is generally seen as the symbol of a washerwoman who rinses blood-soaked clothing in streams. Those who run across her are doomed to a brutal fate.

The Gwrach y Rhibyn

The *gwrach y rhibyn* is another form of hideously aged woman who can be seen at crossroads threatening travelers, or who's seen only in brief glimpses beside streams and ponds. The wail of the gwrach y rhibyn is believed to signal impending death, and she's sometimes known to attack sleeping children or the defenseless bedridden to drain their blood, weakening her victims until they perish. Evidence of her visitations is seen in the dried blood that clings to her mouth. It's believed that healthy folks can drive off the gwrach y rhibyn with brute force.

THE IRISH DEARG-DUE

Ireland seems to have imbued many writers with a love of the supernatural; Bram Stoker, author of *Dracula*, and the ghost story writer Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu both called the Emerald Island home. They had a variety of legends on which to draw, but one of the best known is that of the Dearg-Due.

Centuries ago a beautiful young woman from a good family fell in love with a peasant boy. Her family, not surprisingly, opposed the match and insisted she marry an older man from her own social class. Her father forced her into the unwanted marriage, and she died shortly after, from a broken heart or from the violence of her brutish husband. None mourned her except the peasant boy who had been her true love. But on her deathbed she vowed vengeance against those who had wronged her. After death she arose from the grave and visited the house wherein her father was sleeping. She bent over him and sucked the life from his lips. Next she went to the home of her husband where he lay sleeping with his new wife. In her anger, she attacked them and drained their bodies of blood. Now bloodlust is upon her, and each night she rises from her grave to feed her insatiable hunger. The only way to stop her is to pile stones on her grave, thus preventing her from leaving it.

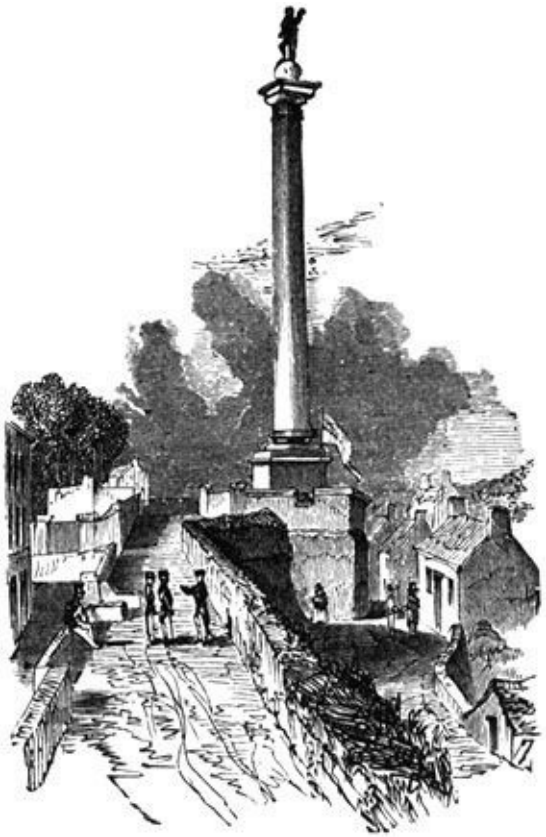
BEWARE THE SíDHE

The Dearg-Due is said by some to be related to the *leanan sídhe*, a beautiful spirit that serves as a muse for artists. However, the poet W.B. Yeats, in his book *Mythologies*, saw these creatures as vampiric and essentially evil. Like the Dearg-Due, the leanan sídhe can be prevented from rising by leaving stones on her grave.

Abhartach

An early Irish legend tells the story of Abhartach, a dwarf in the parish of

An early Irish legend tells the story of Abhartach, a dwarf in the parish of Errigal in Derry. The dwarf was a great magician, but he was also a tyrant who terrorized the people of the countryside. A neighboring chieftain, Fionn Mac Cumhail, slew the dwarf, but he rose from the dead and ranged across the land, drinking the blood of his victims. Mac Cumhail killed him a second time and then a third, and still the magician rose from his grave. Finally Mac Cumhail killed him with a sword made from a yew tree. Abhartach was buried upside down, his grave was surrounded by thorn bushes, and a large stone was placed on top of it. This seems to have done the trick, and Ireland was free from his ravages. Some literary historians have suggested that Bram Stoker found inspiration for the story of the blood-drinking Dracula in this Irish legend.



VAMPIRES IN ENGLAND

In Berwick, in the north of England, a story was passed down from the Middle Ages about a local man who died, possibly of the plague, and whose spirit wandered the town, spreading disease and fear. He was accompanied by a pack of spectral hounds, whose mournful howling announced his presence. The townsfolk eventually dug up his body from where it had been buried on unconsecrated ground, cut it to pieces, and burnt it. A similar corpse burning took place in Melrose, Scotland, to stop the depredations of a vampire.

At Croglin Grange in Cumberland, a vampire story was recorded by the writer Augustine Hare in the nineteenth century. It concerned a woman and her two brothers who rented an old house. One night as they slept, the woman was awakened by a strange creature at her window with a brown face and flaming eyes. It came into the room, fastened on her throat, and drank her blood. The three people fled the house for a time, but when they returned, so did the vampire. One of the brothers shot it in the leg and they were able to trace it to a vault in the local cemetery. There they discovered it sleeping in its coffin and burned it.

> “Vampires can live a very long time, theoretically forever, which means their idea of getting down to business can be damn leisurely.”
>
> —*Obsidian Butterfly* by Laurell K. Hamilton

The Highgate Vampire

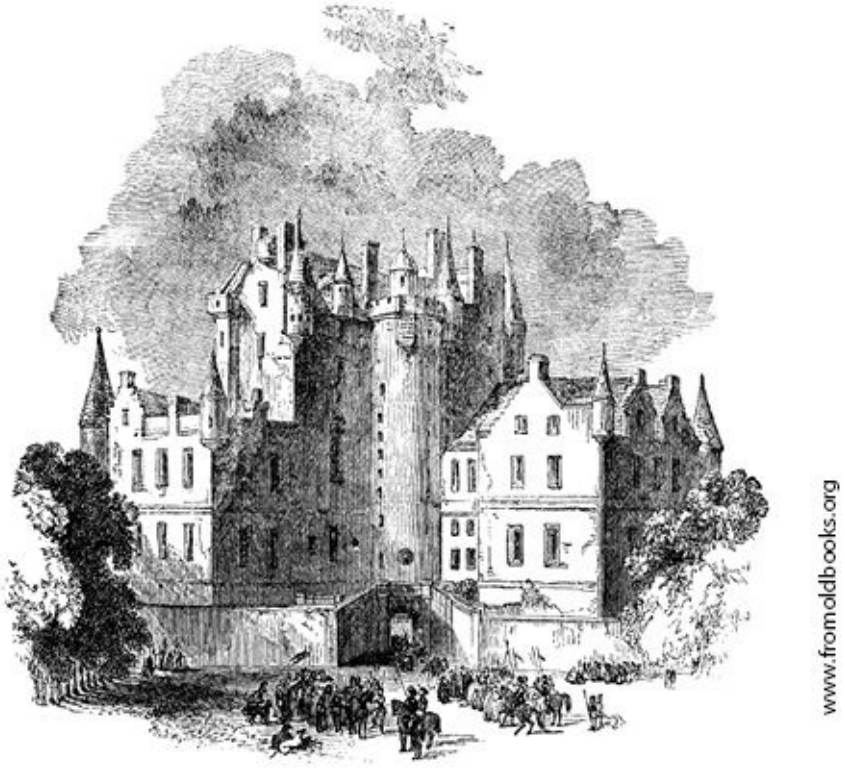
Highgate Cemetery in London is one of the most famous burial sites in the United Kingdom, being the resting place of such notable figures as George Eliot

United Kingdom, being the resting place of such notable figures as George Eliot, Christina Rossetti, and Karl Marx. In 1963, people walking by its gates after dark reported seeing a phantom roaming the grounds. Shortly after, the carcasses of several animals drained of blood were found. Other sightings were reported, and in one case a young girl actually reported being attacked by the vampire. Fortunately for her, she was rescued before she was bitten. The sightings gradually died away in the 1970s, perhaps connected to the renovation of the cemetery, which today is a major London tourist attraction.

SCOTTISH VAMPIRES

Scotland, land of lonely moors and forbidding mountains where castles brood over the sullen waters of windless lochs, has its own impressive catalogue of vampire lore. In Glamis Castle in Scotland, sometimes called the most haunted castle in all of the United Kingdom (as well as the reputed site of Macbeth's murder of King Duncan), lairds of the castle are rumored to guard a terrible secret: the birth of a vampire child into the family. The child was kept in a hidden room within the castle and never seen by outsiders. Some say that a vampire child is born into each successive generation of the holders of the castle.

A related story says that several hundred years ago a servant was found crouched over a body, drinking its blood. She was walled up in a room within the castle and vanished from human sight, though not from memory.



Glamis Castle

More Scottish Blood Drinkers

More Scottish Blood Drinkers

More recently at Blair Atholl in the 1920s, two poachers, resting from their nightly labors, reported being attacked by some undescribed creature that drank blood from each of them. They successfully fought it off, but the story has served as a warning to travelers who avoid being caught in the open air of the Highlands after dark.

In the William Brien House, a hotel in Inverleith near Edinburgh, during the winter of 1915–1916 staff and visitors were terrified by an apparition that they said bore an unmistakable air of evil. A medical student, Andrew Muir, volunteered to investigate the matter. Muir asked to spend the night alone in the room where the apparition had been seen. Reluctantly the house's owners agreed, but gave him a bell he could ring in case of alarm. Several hours after he shut himself in the room, listeners heard the frantic ringing of the bell, accompanied by a horrid scream. Rushing into the room, they found the body of the unfortunate medical student slumped in his chair, dead. The body bore puncture wounds to the throat and shoulder. The murder was never solved, but later investigators uncovered the story of the house's former owner, a man named William Brien. Before he died, Brien gave instructions that his grave was to be forty feet deep and the coffin was to be kept secure—possibly because he feared what he might do if he escaped from the grave.

Other Scottish vampires are rural in their haunts. The Scottish *baobhan sith* are thought to be seductive maidens who can take on the appearance of crows and ravens to move freely about. In their maiden form, the baobhan sith lure travelers and hunters into singing and dancing with them, and during the course of the merriment, slay their unsuspecting victims. The Scottish *redcap* is thought to be an evil spirit who inhabits abandoned castles and fortifications, and attempts to dip its hat into the blood of sleeping wanderers in order to dye its headwear crimson. A fashionable fiend, to be certain, but not particularly friendly. Fortunately, religious words and artifacts are enough to drive the redcap to seek other, less pious victims.

“It is easy to see why each man kills the things he loves. To know a living thing is to kill it … To try to know a living being is to try to suck the life out of that being. The temptation of the vampire fiend, is this knowledge. The desirous consciousness, the spirit, is a vampire.”

—“Edgar Allan Poe,” *Studies in Classic American Literature* by D.H. Lawrence

CHAPTER 6

Vampires of the Far East and India

FROM THE MYTHS of China, Japan, and India come tales of bloodsuckers that rival anything found in western Europe and the Americas. Although these vampires are far different from most of those we're familiar with, we can see that they belong to the same folkloric tradition.

VAMPIRES OF CHINA

Although vampires as we've come to love and loathe them in Western culture, literature, and film are usually of European descent, the power, fear, and fascination of vampiric fright knows no borders. The Chinese *jiang shi*, also spelled *chiang shih*, is sometimes referred to as the *hopping ghost*, and is the reanimated corpse of a victim of drowning, hanging, suicide, or smothering. Possessed of pale skin and long, sharp fingernails, the jiang shi are thought to be particularly vicious, ripping the limbs and heads from their victims. They also drain the life force from humans. The universal vampiric garlic remedy is effective against this nasty creature, as are salt and metal filings. And curiously, the sound of thunder is a natural killer of the beasts. As well, they can be combatted with the fur of a black dog, a sword made from the wood of a peach tree, a hen's egg, glutinous rice, and the urine of a virgin boy.

TWO SOULS

Chinese philosophers believe in the existence of two souls within the human body. One, which is a superior soul, can take the form of the body and wander around by itself. It can even possess another body, albeit briefly. The inferior soul, or *p'ai*, can inhabit a body even after the body is deceased. The body animated by the p'ai is a jiang shi, or vampire.

The Resuscitated Corpse

In the seventeenth century the writer P'u Sung-ling wrote a short story, "The Resuscitated Corpse," featuring a vampire. It seems that four merchants stopped at an inn. Because the inn was crowded, they were housed in the barn, where the body of the innkeeper's daughter-in-law was laid out for burial. In the middle of the night the corpse came to life, and with sharpened fangs attacked the sleeping

the night the corpse came to life, and with sharpened fangs attacked the sleeping merchants. Fortunately, one of them had been unable to go to sleep and had stayed awake reading. When the jiang shi approached him, he ran out the door. The vampire hied after him at full speed, her long claws thrust out, seeking to tear his throat. Closer and closer she came, and the exhausted man believed his last hour had come. Finally he stood at bay beneath the branches of a willow tree. But as the vampire charged, he found the strength to dodge, and the jiang shi's claws stuck deep in the wood of the tree. Unable to move, she shrieked, while her intended victim fainted from fright and exhaustion.

The next day, the merchant awoke beneath the tree, but there was no sign of the vampire. He retraced his steps to the inn and found his three companions dead. The body of the daughter-in-law lay where it had been the previous evening. She was covered in blood but appeared otherwise undisturbed. The innkeeper confessed to the merchant that the woman had died some six months earlier and that he had been waiting for an astrologically favorable time to bury her.

"I am neither good, nor bad, neither angel nor devil, I am a man, I am a vampire."

—*I, Vampire* by Michael Romkey

Chinese Vampires in the Movies

Beginning in the 1980s, Chinese cinema saw a renaissance of the vampire horror film. While vampire films had been made by companies based in Hong Kong during the 1950s and 1960s, they were of generally poor quality. These new films quickly found a following and included such gems as *The Haunted Cop Shop* (1987), in which vampires take over a meat-packing plant; *Dragon Against Vampire* (1985); *The Close Encounter of the Vampire* (1986); and *Robo Vampire* (1988). Meanwhile, filmmakers in Taiwan were turning out titles like *Mr. Vampire* (1985) and *Elusive Song of the Vampire* (1987).

JAPANESE VAMPIRES

The Japanese *kappa* is a creepy critter resembling a hairless monkey with large round eyes and webbed fingers and toes. The kappa springs from its hiding places in waterways and ponds, and has the distasteful habit of sucking blood from its victims through their intestines. In Malaysia, a pair of these vampirish villains can spring from the body of a mother who dies in childbirth and from her stillborn baby. The mother then becomes a *langsuyar*, and the poor child reappears as a *pontianak*, and both reanimate to seek jealous revenge on living victims, showcasing the unnerving habit of ripping open their victims' bellies to suck out blood.

Black-and-white illustration of a *Kappa* by Toriyama Sekien, 1776

OTHER JAPANESE VAMPIRES

- Some people in Japan may be plagued by *gaki*, pale corpses that wail and howl for blood. They can change their shape to resemble animals or people.

- A beautiful woman who becomes possessed by a demon will be transformed into a *hannya*. This terrible creature drinks blood and eats children.
- The *kasha* are ghouls that devour corpses and drink their blood.
- If a woman becomes so angry that her status is lowered during reincarnation, she may be reborn as *yasha* or vampire bat

Penanggalan in Indonesia

Another unsettling creature of Indonesian lore is the *penanggalan*, which is often described as a midwife who's made a pact with the devil. While she behaves normally during the day, by night she becomes a gruesome detached head with a tail of entrails and intestines dangling from her severed neck. This hideous apparition is capable of flight and goes on the hunt for women in labor. The penanggalan perches on rooftops to wail during childbirth and attempts to lap the blood of a mother and newborn with a long, thin tongue sliding down through the rafters.

A related creature is the *jenglot*, which resembles a tiny living human doll. It can be fed on animal or human blood (the human blood is purchased by the jenglot's owner through the Red Cross). Although many jenglots have been found to be hoaxes, Indonesians believe strongly in this myth, and occasionally exhibitions of jenglots are organized.

THE INDIAN EFFECT

Many vampire researchers believe that India may well have been an original source of some vampire mystique. Throughout the millennia, Indian culture and religion have generated an enormous variety of deities, demons, and superstitious beliefs and legends, and many of the ancient vampirelike Indian entities are still alive and well in modern lore. It's possible that tales of these legendary, and often bloodthirsty, demonic entities made their way into European myth by caravan, conquest, or immigration to commingle and evolve with the lore of other regions many centuries ago.

Rakshasas and Yatu-dhana

In ancient Hinduism, the universe was divided into areas of existence, with the subterranean region serving as home to demons and evil spirits. From here were born the frightening *rakshasas*, fanged ogres in human form who inhabit cemeteries, from where they wander into the night to loathsomely slaughter infants and pregnant women. The *yatu-dhana*, sometimes spelled *hatu-dhana*, are an evolutionary step below the rakshasas and are believed to ghoulishly feed on the human remains left by a rakshasa.

KALI AS VAMPIRE

The goddess Kali is intrinsically linked to blood-drinking in Indian lore. A famous legend of Kali describes her battle against the demon god Raktabija in which every drop of blood spilled from his body created a duplicate of him, and the battlefield soon became filled with reproductions. Kali finally destroyed the demon by sucking every last drop of blood from his body.

Kali by Raja Ravi Varma

Bhuta and Vetalas

Still more demonic deities exist in Indian lore that display horrific vampire characteristics. The *bhuta* represents the spirits of those who are insane, who were killed by sudden, accidental death, or who suffer physical defects. The bhuta inhabit ruins and cremation sites and can enter the bodies of victims to feed on corpses and even on the living. They're also held responsible for droughts, crop failures, illness, and insanity—or for that matter, virtually any calamity. The *vetala*, or *betail*, is another demonic creature that co-opts the bodies of living victims, and like many of the Indian night stalkers, delights in killing children, causing miscarriages, and driving people mad. The sheer range and number of demonic Indian deities and spirits and the countless incarnations of them from region to region is enough to fill several books. There's no question that, over the millennia, they've caused many hundreds of thousands of innocents in India to bolt their doors, shutter their windows, and keep candles burning well into the night.

BOUNTY ON VAMPIRES

In the spring of 2012, terrified villagers in the Indian village of

In the spring of 2022, terrified villagers in the Indian village of Dharampuri claimed that local vampires were attacking their cattle, sucking the blood from the animals. No amount of reasoning could convince them otherwise, so local politicians came up with an idea: They offered a bounty of $2,000 to any villager who brought them a captured or killed vampire. In point of fact, officials believed that the whole thing was a hoax, perpetrated by criminals trying to scare the villagers into staying off the streets at night so their operations would not be disturbed.

CHAPTER 7

Vampires of North and South America

THE AMERICAS HAVE produced their own vampire lore—not, it's true, in the copious amounts we find in Europe, but enough the freeze the blood and raise the hair. Unsurprisingly, some of the earliest legends are pre-Columbian in origin.

VAMPIRES OF NORTH AMERICA

Although Native American legends don't speak of any creatures that exactly mirror European vampires, there are some monsters lurking at the edge of Native myth that rise from the dead and feed upon the living. For instance, the Chippewa tell of *windigos*, monsters that were once humans who committed cannibalism. Now, in their undead form, they wander the wilderness, devouring those whom they meet, first turning their hearts to ice.

As well, Navajo legends speak of skin-walkers, terrible creatures that roam the night. They were humans who used black magic or committed awful crimes. At night they take the form of animals to prey on their victims. They avoid sunlight and can only be killed by learning their secret names.

Vampirism in its European form made its bloody way across the Atlantic Ocean to America in the seventeenth century and reared its head in New England as early as the Revolutionary War era. European inhabitants of the Northeast saw a link between tuberculosis (called "consumption" in early years) and vampire mischief.

"Both late wayfarers and sleepers with open windows were attacked, and those who lived to tell the tale spoke unanimously of a lean, lithe, leaping monster with burning eyes which fastened its teeth in the throat or upper arm and feasted ravenously."

—*The Case of Charles Dexter Ward* by H.P. Lovecraft

The Ship of the Dead

In 1607 the British ship *Cormorant* crossed the ocean from Portsmouth, England, to the Caribbean island of Nevis (part of the Leeward Islands in the West Indies). Among its crew, so stories go, was Andrew Oglethorpe who, though he did not at first realize it, had been infected by a vampire's bite in Portsmouth. By the time the ship reached its destination, Oglethorpe had passed his vampirism on to other crew members, who overpowered and killed the captain. When the ship landed, it held only the undead, who quickly spread vampirism to their new home.

Getting Snuffed

One of the earliest American legends involves the family of a prosperous Rhode Island farmer named Stukeley "Snuffy" Tillinghast, who'd fathered fourteen children. Not long after his eldest daughter, Sarah, had taken ill and passed away, several more of his brood became sick and complained of nightmares during which Sarah returned to press on their chests. After a number of the children had succumbed in rapid succession and another was in the throes of sickness, Snuffy's neighbors suggested he dig up Sarah's body for clues to the

of sickness, Shurtly's neighbors suggested he dig up Sarah's body for clues to the seemingly mysterious contagion. Poor Sarah's heart was said to have contained fresh blood—a sure sign of vampirism—and it was quickly removed and burned. According to the story, only one more child died; the rest remained healthy, thus confirming the sordid vampiric diagnosis.

No Mercy

The Tillinghast legend undoubtedly influenced the actions of several families who suffered similar afflictions over the next hundred years in New England. The last of the "vampires" was another Rhode Islander, Mercy Brown, who died in 1892. In the early 1880s, Mercy's mother and sister, Mary Olive, had taken ill and died, and several years later, Mercy's brother, Edwin, began suffering the same apparent ailment. After the lad took a sudden downturn after Mercy's passing, the community surmised that Mercy was the cause of his escalated misery. The bodies of Mrs. Brown, Mary Olive, and Mercy were exhumed, and of the three, Mercy's organs were still horrifyingly intact.

Ignoring the obvious fact that her mother and sister were long dead and decomposed, the vampire hunters placed Mercy's heart and liver on a rock, burned them to ashes, and fed the result to Edwin as a remedy on the advice of a physician. In an anticlimactic unhappy ending, Edwin soon passed away himself, and the whole tawdry affair became a media sensation. The only benefit to come of Mercy Brown's ignominious fate was that it put the final nail in the coffin of vampiric witch hunts in early America.

NATIVE VAMPIRES

Álvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca (d. 1558), an early traveler in North America, reported that natives had told him a curious story about a very remarkable creature:

They said there wandered then about the country a man, whom they called 'Bad Thing,' of small stature and with a beard, although they

never could see his features clearly, and whenever he would approach their dwellings their hair would stand on end and they began to tremble. In the doorway of the lodge there would then appear a firebrand. That man thereupon came in and took hold of anyone he chose, and with a sharp knife of flint, as broad as a hand and two palms in length, he cut their side, and, thrusting his hand through the gash, took out the entrails, cutting off a piece one palm long, which he threw into the fire. Afterwards he made three cuts in one of the arms, the second one at the place where people are usually bled, and twisted the arm, but reset it soon afterwards. Then he placed his hands on the wounds, and they told us that they closed at once.

Many times he appeared among them while they were dancing, sometimes in the dress of a woman and again as a man, and whenever he took a notion to do it he would seize the hut or lodge, take it up into the air and come down with it again with a great crash. They also told us how, many a time, they set food before him, but he never would partake of it, and when they asked him where he came from and where he had his home, he pointed to a rent in the earth and said his house was down below."

Cabeza concluded that the creature was the devil—or a vampire.

LATIN AMERICAN VAMPIRES

Independent of the Slavic vampire traditions, the countries of what are now Latin America have developed their own distinctive vampire legends. In Mayan lore, Camazotz is a monstrous mix of a human body with the head of a bat that may have developed its origins from the vampire bats of South America. Camazotz personifies death and sacrifice, and people greatly fear the caves that are thought to be his lair.

Cihuateteo

The *cihuateteo* are thought to be the souls of women who died in childbirth, which gave them the status of warriors. Although the spirit of the cihuateteo gave strength to warriors in battle, their physical remains wander the earth to attack children and spread disease and madness. Food offerings are often left at crossroads where the creatures are thought to gather and from where they launch their nighttime assaults on the living. Crossroads are commonplace in vampire legend (see the *civatateo*, following), also serving as places where vampires can be destroyed.

THE GOAT SUCKER

The *chupacabra*, which is Spanish for “goat sucker,” is one of the most recent vampirish creatures to enter modern legend. Since the 1990s, bloody attacks on livestock in Puerto Rico, Mexico, Texas, and as far north as Maine have been attributed to the elusive chupacabra. Over the years these episodes have triggered media hysterics as well as a handful of fanciful horror films and appearances on serial television dramas such as *The X-Files*. The few alleged chupacabras killed by wary ranchers have turned out to be ill, emaciated, and mange-ridden coyotes.

Chupacabra by Alvin Padayachee

Tlahuelpuchi

In most of Latin America, the term *bruja*, or witch, is common and often used to describe the ferocious *tlahuelpuchi*, a bloodsucking witch who can transform into a variety of animals in order to roam about freely. These creatures are particularly mean-spirited, sucking the blood and life from innocent infants and possessing hypnotic powers that can cause adults to commit suicide. Garlic, onions, and metal can be placed in or around a baby’s crib for protection from

this fiendish vampire witch, but unexplained infant deaths to this day are still often attributed to the tlahuelpuchi in remote areas of Mexico. The child’s unfortunate parents suffer scorn and blame for a lack of vigilant protection.

VAMPIRES IN CENTRAL AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

The lands south of the United States are rife with stories of bloodsucking entities. On the island of Trinidad, for example, the *sukuyan* lives its daily life in the guise of an ordinary human, but at night it roams freely as a ball of light, searching out innocent victims and consuming their blood. Communities protect themselves against it by placing crosses above doors and windows and a broom upside down behind the door. A similar creature is the *tlaciques* in Mexico, which also takes the form of a ball of light when seeking its prey. It can also turn into a turkey.

The *civatateo*, on the other hand, is bound to the old gods of ancient civilizations in Mexico. It served Tezcatlipoca and Tlazolteotl, deities worshiped by the Aztecs. The Aztec and Mayan civilizations, which ruled much of what is now Central America and Mexico, have a history of bloodthirsty deities that predate the first Spanish explorers, and their influence is still felt in modern lore, particularly in rural areas. The civatateo appears to unwary travelers as a pale, shrunken woman whose hands are coated with white chalk. Her tattered dress is covered in crossbones and she inspires as much pity as dread. To guard against her attacks, travelers could place food at shrines located at crossroads.

PART 3

VAMPIRES IN POP CULTURE

CHAPTER 8
Vampires in Literature

"Searchers after horror haunt strange, far places."

—"THE PICTURE IN THE HOUSE" BY H.P. LOVECRAFT

OVER THE CENTURIES the literary community has embraced the vampire in all its preternatural glory. From its earliest inception to the present day, vampire literature has had myriad resurrections with bloodsuckers spread across all genres, from serialized novels based on television series to comedies to Westerns to gothic and modern romance and historical horror. Authors can transport you to another place and time along with some of the most romantic and notorious bloodsuckers in history.

THE FOUNDERS

Of all the authors of celebrated fiction, Bram Stoker is probably the least-known writer of one of the best-known stories in history. Stoker's frightening depiction of the quintessential vampire in his innovatively constructed 1897 masterpiece *Dracula* brought the world of the undead to life. What many may not realize is that while Stoker and his characters are unquestionably the most famous, his vampiric tale wasn't the first to come to prominence. He was preceded by John Polidori's story *The Vampyre*, James Malcolm Rymer's penny dreadful *Varney the Vampyre*, and Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu's erotic *Carmilla*.

Bram Stoker

The Vampyre

In May 1816 a group gathered along Switzerland's Lake Geneva at the Villa Diodati. En route to Italy, but stalled by bad weather, were the English poet Lord Byron; his mistress of the moment, Claire Clairmont; his traveling companion and personal physician John Polidori; and poet Percy Bysshe Shelley and his future wife, Mary Wollstonecraft Godwin. In an effort to entertain themselves,

they decided each would concoct a ghost story to share with the others. In response to that challenge Byron produced a partial tale about a vampire, Polidori wrote a story hinged on a “skull-headed lady,” and eighteen-year-old Mary began a novel that became the basis of *Frankenstein*, one of the most famous horror novels of all time.

The Finest Form of Flattery

In 1819, *The Vampyre: A Tale*, which Polidori penned using the framework of Byron’s story as told at the Villa Diodati, was published in England’s *New Monthly Magazine*. The short story focuses on the sinister bloodsucker Lord Ruthven, who by no small coincidence bears a striking resemblance to Lord Byron.

TALL, DARK, AND BLOODTHIRSTY

Polidori naturally fought for the credit in writing *The Vampyre*, and a massive and seemingly eternal controversy ensued that is debated to this day. Byron eventually denied authoring *The Vampyre*, and Polidori —admitting to Byron’s involvement and issuing credit—was named author of the tale. Tragically, Polidori would gain little from his triumph as he died in 1821, allegedly by his own hand.

The Vampyre was initially published under Byron’s name, the weight of his reputation quickly leading to many foreign language versions of the tale as well as numerous theatrical productions. We can credit Polidori for inventing the *Byronic vampire*, meaning one who possesses characteristics typical of characters in Byron’s body of work or his physical appearance.

The Vampyre’s protagonist is a young, wealthy innocent named Aubrey who becomes enamored by the aristocratic Lord Ruthven, slowly learning and accepting what an evil demon his lordship is, too late to save his sister from

forced marriage and death at Ruthven's hands. The pallor of the vampire's skin, his bloodlust, his eroticism, his arrogance, and all his preternatural manipulations immediately inspired mimicry by other authors, including James Malcolm Rymer, Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu, and Bram Stoker.

Varney the Vampyre

Though there were many representations of literary vampires spun off Polidori's Lord Ruthven, it wasn't until the mid-1840s that the public was introduced to a different kind of vampire, one whose appearance and ferocity harken back to the monstrous revenants of folklore. Sir Francis Varney was the star of the penny dreadful turned novel *Varney the Vampyre; or, the Feast of Blood* written by James Malcolm Rymer. Sir Francis Varney (ambiguously cited as the reanimated corpse of 1640 suicide victim Marmaduke Bannerworth) is the epitome of cruelty and banality, his corpselike form stalking young girls in a disjointed epic that ran as 109 separate publications and later as a novel with 220 chapters amounting to over 860 pages.

> "There was a tall, gaunt form—there was the faded ancient apparel—the lustrous metallic-looking eyes—its half-opened mouth, exhibiting tusk-like teeth! It was—yes, it was—the vampyre!"
>
> —*Varney the Vampyre* by James Malcolm Rymer

What Varney represents to vampire literature is yet another stage of evolution that, unlike Lord Ruthven, draws from the dark side of folklore while also retaining the traditional characteristics that have become synonymous with the

drawing-room vampire in general. Perhaps Varney's most spectacular act, rendered by the still-unknown illustrator who gave brilliant life to the series, is his demise, which is not by the hands of a vampire slayer, but of his own volition. Dramatically, Varney leaps into the mouth of Mount Vesuvius.

THE WALKING DEAD

By definition, the term *reanimation* refers to the restoration of life or consciousness. Commonly used in the horror realm with everything from Frankenstein to zombies to doppelgangers to killer bunnies, it serves to reinforce revenant folklore, as the majority of so-called vampires were reanimated corpses.

CARMILLA

In 1872, another fold of the cloak that would envelop the beginnings of vampire literature and cinema was revealed in the form of Irishman Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu's *Carmilla*, a novella published as part of his novel *In a Glass Darkly*. Le Fanu not only brought the erotic vampire to the forefront—he made his antagonistic bloodsucker a woman. Le Fanu's *Carmilla* also reinforced or established many of the vampiric traits used throughout fiction and scores of films,

Carmilla's protagonist and narrator is Laura, who lives with her aged father and servants in a castle in Styria, Austria, near the deserted village of Karnstein. Her first encounter with the demon is at age six, when during one night a pretty young woman appears by her bedside. After the woman calms her to sleep, Laura feels "a sensation as if two needles ran into my breast very deep." With the absence of wounds on her chest, she believes the visitor to be an apparition. Laura grows up in relative isolation, and at age nineteen she hopes to meet the niece and ward of General Spielsdorf, Mademoiselle Bertha Rheinfeldt, only to learn that she has died. Immediately after receiving word of Bertha's death, Laura and her father witness a strange carriage accident, in which a woman and her daughter are involved. Hindered by a life or death situation, the mother leaves her daughter in the care of Laura's father, and when Laura and the girl first meet, it becomes evident that they've met before—she's the woman from Laura's "dreams," and claims that Laura is from hers. Her name is Carmilla.

Illustration by David Henry Friston for *Carmilla*, 1872

The Cat’s Meow

By Laura’s own description, Carmilla is a stunning beauty, slender and graceful, though languid, and possessing a rich complexion, large eyes, and dark, lustrous hair. The young woman refuses to speak of her family, where she’s from, or her personal history or future plans. All that is known is that she’s of noble blood from an ancient family. From there, the tale grows dark, especially when Laura realizes that a recently arrived family portrait depicting the Countess Mircalla Karnstein—painted more than a century earlier in 1698—looks *exactly* like Carmilla. At the same time, Laura grows continuously ill, her nights tormented by “a sooty-black animal that resembled a monstrous cat” and a “stinging pain as if two large needles darted, an inch or two apart, deep into my breast.” The animal would then transform into the figure of a woman.

During a chance meeting with General Spielsdorf, it’s learned that his niece, Bertha, grew ill during the time they had a visitor named Mircalla, who was left in his charge while her mother was away on urgent business. Bertha described to him the same encounters as Laura is experiencing. Acting on a physician’s

outrageous diagnosis of vampirism, Spielsdorf had hidden in Bertha's closet and lay in wait, seeing for himself a black creature attacking her neck and transforming into Mircalla. When he attacked her with a sword, Mircalla fled, and he vowed to find and destroy her. At the ruins of Karnstein chapel, Spielsdorf and Laura encounter Carmilla, whom the general recognizes as Mircalla. He then notes that in her deception, she made an anagram of her given name to form "Carmilla." The following day, with legal authority, the tomb of Countess Mircalla Karnstein is opened. She's perfectly preserved, exudes no smell, and her body is immersed in seven inches of blood. The vampire hunters drive a stake through her heart and she shrieks, after which she's decapitated and the whole of her burnt to ashes and scattered upon the river.

Carmilla Karnstein stands as one of the most influential literary and cinematic vampires. Le Fanu's haunting portrayal of Laura and Carmilla's tense relationship is seething with sexual undertones that no doubt would have proved shocking to the Victorians.

REVENANTS RISING

There's little doubt that Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu studied the vampires of folklore when writing *Carmilla*. When General Spielsdorf asks a woodsman at the chapel why the village of Karnstein lies deserted, the woodsman replies, "It was troubled by revenants, sir; several were tracked to their graves, there detected by the usual tests, and extinguished in the usual way, by decapitation, by the stake, and by burning; but not until many of the villagers were killed." This is a situation very typical of accounts telling how vampires and other revenants were disposed of.

Le Fanu, as did Polidori and Rymer and a handful of other writers of the day, contributed to the evolution of the vampire. But it wasn't until another Irishman submitted a novel, originally called *The Undead*, that the figure of the drawing-

room vampire become set in stone as a permanent fixture in the cryptic vampire realm.

THE OBSCURE ROAD TO FAME

During his lifetime, Bram Stoker never realized the impact that *Dracula* would have on millions of mesmerized readers and moviegoers. For much of his adult life, Stoker remained a relatively obscure figure who regularly brushed shoulders with the famous and near-famous. Only after his death would he gain distinction as the creator of one of the most celebrated characters in fiction.

Learning to Walk

Born on November 8, 1847, in Dublin, Ireland, the third of seven children, Stoker was sickly and bedridden with a variety of childhood ailments until he reached the age of seven, when he made a seemingly miraculous and complete recovery. After graduating Trinity College in Dublin with honors as a science major, he returned for an advanced degree in mathematics. During his college years, he became involved with literary, philosophical, and dramatic groups, setting the stage for his fascination for theater and literature.

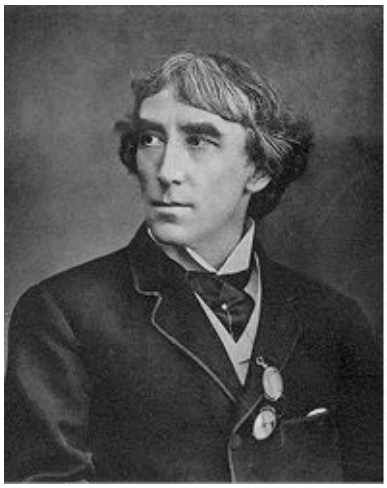
Flair for the Theatrical

After Stoker wrote a review in 1876 praising actor Henry Irving during a tour by Irving's acting troupe in Dublin, Irving invited Stoker to dinner. A lasting relationship was born from that meeting. Two years later, in 1878, Irving had taken over the Lyceum Theatre in London and invited Stoker to join him as stage manager.

The Dark Side

Now in London with a new wife and a new career, Bram Stoker threw himself headlong into the acting world. At the same time, he began actively pursuing his second career as a writer, publishing the novel *The Snake's Pass* in 1890. The

same year, Stoker began writing *Dracula*, an endeavor that would take him seven years to prepare for publication.



Henry Irving

Much has been written about the inspiration for the character of Count Dracula. Although there's little doubt that Bram Stoker appropriated his villain's name from Vlad Dracula of Wallachia (see Chapter 4), the physical characteristics of Dracula are commonly believed to have been inspired by none other than his business associate, Henry Irving. The great actor's stature, grace, and facial features are found in Stoker's account of the gruesome literary Count, and it's probable that Irving's fiery temperament provided more than a little inspiration for Dracula's forbidding nature.

DRACULA ONSTAGE

By coincidence, Bram Stoker's family home was next door to the estate of young Hamilton Deane's family. Deane eventually came to work as a bit-actor for Sir Henry Irving's Vacation Company, an acting troupe that toured extensively throughout Europe and America after the closing of the Lyceum Theatre in 1899. Deane would play an integral role in rewriting the successful stage play for Stoker's *Dracula* in 1924, revamping the role of Van Helsing for himself.

Dracula was published in 1897, and although it received broad critical acclaim, the public was slow to purchase it. Stoker was poor, and by the end of his life he had to rely on a grant from the Royal Literary Fund to survive. His novel lived on into the twentieth century, where it was transformed into a horror classic.

OUT OF THE SHADOWS

Although a few powerful novels and short stories featuring vampires were written in the first two-thirds of the twentieth century (most notably, *I Am Legend* by Richard Matheson), the full revival of vampire fiction didn’t come until later. When it did, it featured an odd, erotic twist on the older stories.

LES VAMPIRES DE ANNE RICE

"I am the Vampire Lestat. I'm immortal more or less. The light of the sun, the sustained heat of an intense fire—these things might destroy me. But then again, they might not."

—*The Vampire Lestat* by Anne Rice

Few writers have brought vampires to life—or undeath—like Anne Rice, who created the most influential vampire since Stoker's Dracula. During the course of her career Rice has unleashed upon the world a family of vampires known simply by their singular names: Louis, Pandora, Armand, Marius, Maharet, Merrick, Akasha, and Magnus, to name a few. But it was at the beginning of her literary endeavors in 1976, with the masterpiece *Interview with the Vampire*, that she introduced the intensely emotional preternatural ebb and flow that *is* the vampire Lestat.

Not since *Dracula* have the collective hearts, minds, and souls of the public been drawn to a vampire whose seductive charm, wicked intellect, philosophical nature, and excruciating thirst to reconcile good and evil make him a true vampire of the ages. Unlike Dracula, Rice instilled in Lestat de Lioncourt—her ultimate hero—a deep and unbridled emotion matched only by the wisdom he so desperately seeks, whether it be in his understanding of his reluctant fledgling Louis de Pointe du Lac, the teachings of the ancient Marius and Talamascan David Talbot, the destructive capacities of the ancient Akasha, or his confrontations with God and the alleged devil himself in *Memnoch the Devil*.

It's said that Lestat was based on both Rice and her husband, Stan. The idea of *Interview with the Vampire* came to Rice when her five-year-old daughter, Michelle, succumbed to a rare form of leukemia. In life, Lestat was from an aristocratic lineage fallen on hard times during the 1780s. Born as a vampire by Magnus in the latter part of the 1700s, Lestat is, in all his vanity and bold endeavors, the quintessential vampire of the modern era.

Complex and luxuriously rich in their conception, their lineage, and their powers, Rice's *la famille de vampires* are among the most revered in history. Rice has told their tales in the Vampire Chronicles:

- *Interview with the Vampire* (1976)
- *The Vampire Lestat* (1985)
- *The Queen of the Damned* (1988)
- *The Tale of the Body Thief* (1992)
- *Memnoch the Devil* (1995)
- *The Vampire Armand* (1998)
- *Merrick* (2000)
- *Blood and Gold* (2001)
- *Blackwood Farm* (2002)
- *Blood Canticle* (2003)
- *Prince Lestat* (2014)

Loosely connected to the Chronicles are *Pandora* (1998) and *Vittorio the Vampire* (1999). Like Stoker, Anne Rice transformed vampire fiction, and many writers have followed in her wake.

MORE THAN MORTAL BEAUTY

Rice's fiction firmly established what has become one of the canonical tropes of vampire literature: her vampires are supernaturally beautiful. They are tall, thin, pale, and sensitive to emotional and aesthetic vibrations.

“I think that he knew what I meant to do before he even did it, and I was waiting in my helplessness as if I’d been waiting for years. He pressed his bleeding wrist to my mouth, said firmly, a little impatiently, ‘Louis, drink.’ And I did.”

—*Interview with the Vampire* by Anne Rice

POPULAR VAMPIRE FICTION

During the mid-1970s a new wave of vampire novels swept over bookstores. Beginning in 1978, Chelsea Quinn Yarbro introduced us to what would become the Saint-Germain series. Tales of Yarbro's impossibly "human" vampire have been in nonstop evolution for almost forty years and there's no sign of Saint-Germain disappearing into that cold dark night.

Yarbro's first effort in the series, *Hôtel Transylvania*, is set in the French court of King Louis XV in the mid-eighteenth century, and features the enduring Count of Saint-Germain, who's been a vampire for hundreds of years and manages, unlike most vampires, to maintain a sense of superior humanity over bloodlust. In sharp counterpoint to Rice's vampires, or to those of virtually any other author, Yarbro's Saint-Germain is suave, sophisticated, and genuinely concerned about other human beings; in effect, he's a vampire with a soul. Both undead and immortal, he's acutely aware of the frailty of human life and does his best to respect the living, while abhorring the evils that mankind brings upon itself.

The influences of Anne Rice and Yarbro spawned a renewed and unwaning interest in all things dripping crimson. Here are just a few of the notable books and authors who followed in their preternatural steps:

- *The Vampire Tapestry* by Suzy McKee Charnas (1980)
- *Fevre Dream* by George R.R. Martin (1982)
- *Those Who Hunt the Night* by Barbara Hambly (1988)
- *Children of the Night* by Dan Simmons (1992)
- *Single White Vampire* by Lynsay Sands (2003)
- *Blindsight* by Peter Watts (2006)
- *Let the Right One In* by John Ajvide Lindqvist (2007)
- *Abraham Lincoln: Vampire Hunter* by Seth Grahame-Smith (2010)

A Whole Lot of Salem

The prodigious and prolific talents of horror fiction icon Stephen King were put to use in 1975 with his second published novel, *'Salem's Lot*. King is said to have begun the novel after pondering what would happen if Dracula re-emerged in twentieth-century America. The result was a truly creepy story set in the sleepy town of 'Salem's Lot in rural Maine, involving a series of disturbing occurrences and missing children that coincides with the arrival of newcomer Kurt Barlow, who now inhabits an old house with a lurid past. Soon the entire community is overrun as townspeople are transformed into vampires. The protagonists in the book are eventually forced to leave 'Salem's Lot to the vampiric infestation, although they do manage to destroy Barlow before taking flight. *'Salem's Lot* has the unusual distinction of having been made into *two* television series, one in 1979 and the second in 2004.

IT'S ALL IN A NAME

Although King originally called the namesake of the book "Jerusalem's Lot," the publishers shortened the title to *'Salem's Lot* because they felt the original title carried too many religious connotations.

“Death is when the monsters get you.”

—*’Salem’s Lot* by Stephen King

The Historian

In her 2005 novel *The Historian*, Elizabeth Kostova brought Bram Stoker’s *Dracula* into the modern era by excerpting significant chunks of Stoker’s novel and working it into her own historical plot line. In the story, a teenage girl living in Amsterdam discovers in her father’s library an ancient book, which is blank save for a woodcut of a sinister dragon on one page with the word “Drakulya.” The discovery leads to a long search for Dracula, and once again Vlad Tepes comes into the picture—this time with spine-chilling results.

THE ROMANTIC VAMPIRE

Perhaps no other character in literary history has become a more popular subject of romantic fiction than the sexy, alluring, charming vampire. It’s no surprise that in the field of romance literature, vampires have taken a huge bite out of the estimated $1 billion in annual sales generated by the genre and the millions of enthralled readers who blissfully bleed for their favorite heroes and heroines whether they be alive or undead. What follows is a list of some the most popular series of romantic vampire novels to capture the imaginations and hearts of a devoted readership:

- The Riley Jenson Guardian series by Keri Arthur
- The Cassandra Palmer series by Karen Chance
- The Nightwalker series by Jacquelyn Frank
- The Night Huntress series by Jeaniene Frost
- The Gardella Vampire Chronicles by Colleen Gleason
- The Guardians of Eternity series by Alexandra Ivy
- The Vampire series by Linda Lael Miller
- The Little Goddess series by Amy Lane
- The Brotherhood of Blood series by Kathryn Smith
- The Companion series by Susan Squires
- The Darkyn series by Lynn Viehl

PARANORMAL NOSFERATU

Vampire fiction has become an increasingly large part of paranormal romance, beginning in 1986 with the publication of Jayne Ann Krentz's *Sweet Starfire*. The blending of romance, science fiction, and traditional horror created an unforgettable mixture of blood and lust. These novels have crossed virtually every line of fantasy and science fiction to tap into an endless supply of mysterious locales and fantastic supernatural abilities that quite literally know no boundaries.

Anita Blake: Vampire Hunter

Beginning in 1993 with *Guilty Pleasures*, Laurell K. Hamilton's Anita Blake: Vampire Hunter series has developed a legion of die-hard fans. In Anita's parallel universe, she reanimates the dead for a *living*, working for Animators, Inc., as a necromancer, raising and healing long-dead zombies, vampires, and werewolves in a series of hair-raising novels. During the early books, Blake remained remarkably celibate, but by book number ten, she let it all hang out, and romantically intimate interludes have become a minor, although graphic, element of her adventures.

Another author popular in the genre of romantic vampires is the American writer Poppy Z. Brite. The author, who self-identifies as male despite having been born female, has written extensively in gothic horror, and vampires are a key part of his stories. The novel *Lost Souls* (1992) features a group of vampires who are unaffected by sunlight, have relatively short teeth (which they file), and can eat and drink things other than blood. They do have, however, quick healing powers and significantly nonhuman strength. Other vampire novels by Brite include *Drawing Blood* (1993) and *Exquisite Corpse* (1996).

Although Brite has largely moved away from the vampire genre, his novels still remain important mileposts in the gothic world.

Southern Bites

One of the most respected authors of paranormal vampire fiction, Charlaine Harris hit pay dirt with the introduction of Sookie Stackhouse in the Southern Vampire series, beginning in 2001 with *Dead Until Dark*. The first installment won the prestigious Anthony Award for best paperback mystery the year it was released and paved the way for more bestsellers to follow. The series ended in 2013 after thirteen novels. Harris's Sookie Stackhouse is a young telepathic barmaid in northern Louisiana whose "faerie" blood may explain her telepathic powers and her unfortunate ability to attract the unwanted attentions of unearthly beings, including vampires and werewolves. Much of the series is dedicated to Sookie solving supernatural mysteries, as well as handling the dilemmas of personal relationships with members of the netherworld who, with the invention of manufactured synthetic blood, have integrated into society. The entire series

was developed for an HBO series, *True Blood*, starring Anna Paquin as Sookie. Here are the books in Charlaine Harris's popular Southern Vampire series:

- *Dead Until Dark* (2001)
- *Living Dead in Dallas* (2002)
- *Club Dead* (2003)
- *Dead to the World* (2004)
- *Dead as a Doornail* (2005)
- *Definitely Dead* (2006)
- *All Together Dead* (2007)
- *From Dead to Worse* (2008)
- *Dead and Gone* (2009)
- *Dead in the Family* (2010)
- *Dead Reckoning* (2011)
- *Deadlocked* (2012)
- *Dead Ever After* (2013)

COMEDIC BLOODSUCKERS

It may be difficult to imagine that a mix of vampiric bloodsucking and humor could go hand in hand, but just as the preternatural creatures of the night have crept into science fiction, romance, and historical fiction, they've also made pretty tasty fodder for some bloody fun reading. *Death by the Drop* by Timothy Massie is a notable addition to the relatively small list of vampire novels with distinctly humorous undercurrents that almost literally drip with sarcastic wit.

The reigning matriarch of wickedly vampiric fun is unquestionably MaryJanice Davidson, whose Undead series of hilarious books feature the irrepressible Betsy Taylor, a former model and recently unemployed single woman who finds herself flattened by an SUV and comes back to life a queen of the vampires. Rather than taking to the life of the walking dead, "Queen Betsy" attempts to resume her less-than-normal existence of stocking up on designer shoes (midnight sales are now a lot easier) and trying to find a job. Of course, Betsy is also sidelined by irritating conflicts with evil vampiric beings who have absolutely no sense of humor. Davidson's Undead series includes:

- *Undead and Unwed* (2004)
- *Undead and Unemployed* (2004)
- *Undead and Unappreciated* (2005)
- *Undead and Unreturnable* (2005)
- *Undead and Unpopular* (2006)
- *Undead and Uneasy* (2007)
- *Undead and Unworthy* (2008)
- *Undead and Unwelcome* (2009)
- *Undead and Unfinished* (2010)
- *Undead and Undermined* (2011)
- *Undead and Unstable* (2012)

- *Undead and Unsure* (2013)
- *Undead and Unwary* (2014)

YOUNG ADULTS AND THE LIVING DEAD

Literature for young adults has always contained a generous helping of fantasy and horror. Fairy tales such as the story of *Little Red Riding Hood* were pretty harrowing in their day, especially since in the first versions of the tale the wolf ate Red Riding Hood and her granny. Even Bram Stoker took a turn in 1881 at writing fairy tales in the compilation *Under the Sunset*, which was often considered far too disturbing for impressionable minds.

Most modern young adult literature features teens as the major characters, and fictional forays into the world of the undead are no exception. The book series that followed television's *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* is one case in point, with the ultimate Valley Girl, Buffy Summers, continuing her crusade of monster mayhem against the forces of evil. But, in the netherworld of young vampire literature, no one holds a candle—or a crucifix—to Stephenie Meyer and her thoroughly absorbing Twilight series of heart-pounding sagas.

Move Over, Harry Potter

Although Anne Rice has developed a literary reputation as the original Queen of the Damned, Stephenie Meyer has achieved her measure of notoriety and success in the young adult market as more of the Queen of the *Darned*. In a marked departure from the sexual undertones of much youth-oriented literature, Meyer has sidestepped the hormonal rages of growing up to provide a series of wildly popular books featuring teenaged heroine Bella Swan and her continuing relationship with the irresistibly considerate and impossibly gorgeous boy vampire, Edward Cullen.

In the original eponymous book of the Twilight series, published in 2005 and written when Meyer was twenty-nine years old, Bella Swan moves from sun-soaked Phoenix, Arizona, to the damp and dreary town of Forks, Washington, to live with her father. On her first day in school, Bella notices the ethereally

handsome Edward Cullen staring at her with a blood-chilling glare while the phrase “if looks could kill” suddenly runs through her mind. As it turns out, Cullen isn’t offering a threat—he’s just primordially fascinated by her smell. Through the three novels that follow, the pair fall deeply—and chastely—in love and survive painful separations and harrowing scrapes with evil vampires and other creatures of the night.

INNOCENT BLOOD

The innocent nature of Meyer’s novels is no accident. As a devout Mormon and mother, she insists that much of the sex, drinking, and violence of young adult literature upsets her, and she directs her work to the vast audience of youngsters—particularly girls—who don’t identify with or haven’t experienced the darker side of adolescence. For Meyer, her characterization of Bella is that of a nice, normal girl, whose boyfriend is attentively and irreproachably respectful.

Meyer’s unique approach struck a positive chord with an enormous fan base, especially when the series was made into movies, starring Kristen Stewart as Bella and Robert Pattinson as Edward. Books in Stephenie Meyer’s Twilight series include *Twilight* (2005), *New Moon* (2006), *Eclipse* (2007), and *Breaking Dawn* (2008).

“I don’t sparkle … I bite!!!”

—*Fangs Rule: A Girl’s Guide to Being a Vampire* by Amy Mah

THE HEARTBEAT GOES ON

The intensity of interest in the supernatural in the young adult market has become a publishing phenomenon, and it shows no signs of letting up any time soon. Perhaps part of the charm of many of these supernatural chronicles is that they describe everyday situations and put vampire characters into them. As new and increasingly expanding plot lines begin delving into other areas of preternatural beings, there have been popular spinoffs into fascinating characterizations of zombies, werewolves, faeries, and ghosts. But through it all, there's little doubt that vampires are on the leading edge of the paranormal, perhaps because they're not just inherently sexy, they're *dead* sexy.

There are a number of enduring vampire series in the young adult market that you might enjoy, and each of them has its own throng of avid supporters and fans. Here are a few of the most popular:

- The Chronicles of Vladimir Tod series by Heather Brewer
- The Vampire Kisses series by Ellen Schreiber
- The Morganville Vampires series by Rachel Caine
- The Vampire Academy series by Richelle Mead
- The House of Night series by P.C. Cast
- The Blue Bloods series by Melissa de la Cruz
- The Vampire Diaries series by Lisa Jane Smith
- The Night World series by Lisa Jane Smith
- The Cirque du Freak series by Darren Shan
- The Blood and Snow series by RaShelle Workman

CHAPTER 9
Vampires in Film

WITHOUT QUESTION, THE medium of film is where Dracula and his kin have achieved their greatest popularity. That success is in part due to the 1922 silent film *Nosferatu*, the 1920s stage adaptation of *Dracula*, and the legacy begun by Hammer Films in the 1950s and 1960s.

BLOODSUCKING CINEMA

Horror films have a rich history featuring a wide range of tales that prey upon the innate human curiosity surrounding all things that shock, creep, scream, howl, bite, vanish, fly, and mutate. As the technical skills of movie special effects wizards have expanded, so too has the terrifying experience of audiences intensified—and viewers have responded enthusiastically.

Filmmakers who first brought Dracula to the big screen created the idea that the vampire's tale has the ability to reflect both explicitly and symbolically what is occurring in society during various eras, while also retaining the mesmerizing hold that the vampire maintains on its devoted audiences.

SILENT BUT DEADLY

Vampires first appeared in the movies during the silent era. This period marked not only a groundbreaking time in the evolution of entertainment and technology but also opened up an entire world of vampiric show and tell, and many of those films prove that silence is indeed golden. A host of silent vampire flicks were made, beginning with the 1896 French film short *Le Manoir du diable*, otherwise known as *The Devil's Castle* or *Manor of the Devil*, which is often cited as the first vampire film. Many more silent films would follow, but there is one from the golden era of silent pictures that stands alone in its popularity among vampire aficionados.

THE FIRST VAMPIRE DIRECTOR

Most folks haven't heard of Alice Guy-Blaché, but her pioneering and innovative work as a filmmaker is legendary. During her more than twenty-five-year career, beginning in 1894, Guy-Blaché directed, wrote, and produced over 700 films. She is considered by most to be the film industry's first female director. In 1910, together with her husband and another partner, Guy-Blaché founded the Solax Company, one of the

largest production companies of the era. In 1915, she directed *The Vampire* with Olga Petrova and Vernon Steele. By 1922, she returned to France and drifted into obscurity. Her works, however, remain a testament to her talent and contributions to movie-making history.

NOSFERATU: THE SCOURGE OF BREMEN

One of the best known and most revered vampire movies in history is also one of the few silent films to survive the ravages of time. Made in Germany and released in 1922, it is *Nosferatu, eine Symphonie des Grauens*, which means *Nosferatu: A Symphony of Terror*. But it's better known by a single word: *Nosferatu*. Directed by renowned German director Friedrich Wilhelm (F.W.) Murnau, with a screenplay penned by Henrik Galeen, *Nosferatu* is an expressionist film (meaning it takes an extremely subjective viewpoint), which proved to be engaging and utterly frightening in its time and remains so to this day.

The film is an unauthorized version of Stoker's *Dracula*, with its characters and geography altered so that the major story line moves from Transylvania to Bremen, Germany. As is immediately obvious to anyone viewing the film, it wasn't altered enough. Names of the characters were freely (and not very adeptly) altered—for example, Jonathan Harker became William Hutter, Mina Murray was Ellen Hutter, Renfield was known as Knock, and Dracula became Count Graf Orlok (also spelled Orlock). The ploy was used in an effort to avoid copyright infringement, a fact that did nothing to stop the inevitable legal battle at the hands of Stoker's widow, Florence. As a result of a 1925 court ruling, the negatives and all copies of the film were supposed to be destroyed. Obviously a few copies survived, as the first American release came around 1929. (In both earlier and later releases of the film, the character names are changed to Stoker's original characters.) After that, the film remained in relative obscurity until the late seventies, when it was remade by German director Werner Herzog; the original has since achieved cult status.

NOSFERATU

The term *nosferatu* is possibly evolved from the word *nosufuratu*, which is Old Slavonic; however, it may also be derived from the Greek word *nosophoros*, which translates to “plague carrier.” The confusion that a nosferatu is a vampire is often attributed to an 1888 travelogue containing Transylvanian folklore written by Emily Gerard. Called *The Land Beyond the Forest*, it was known to have been used by Bram Stoker in his research for *Dracula*. Stoker used the term to also mean “vampire,” when in fact “plague carrier” is more accurate—according to lore, vampires were sometimes blamed as the cause of plagues.

ENTER DRACULA, STAGE RIGHT

Few folks know that the first adaptation of Bram Stoker's novel was brought to the stage very quickly after *Dracula*'s publication. The playwright was none other than Stoker himself. Sadly, the play was a dismal failure, in part because it was so difficult to present the proper ambience for the Victorian horrorfest. So bad was the production that it was said that even Stoker's close friend Henry Irving couldn't recommend it. It wasn't until fellow Irishman Hamilton Deane, himself a theater producer, playwright, and actor, decided to take on the daunting project that *Dracula* would find its first monetary success.

In 1924, with the permission of Florence Stoker, Deane debuted *Dracula* in Derby, England, at the Grand Theatre. The play starred Edmund Blake as the Count and Deane as Dr. Van Helsing. And while critics of the day weren't necessarily kind, they were of little matter. Audiences loved it—and so did Florence Stoker. That first appearance of Dracula onstage is important, as it marks his first transformation as a proper gentleman of royal blood who obviously possessed the mortal grace to interact with his victims.

Bela Lugosi as Dracula

In America, the play premiered in October 1927 at New York's Fulton

Theatre. This time the production starred a relatively unknown Hungarian actor named Bela Lugosi, who would, of course, go on to play Dracula in Tod Browning’s 1931 feature-length film.

DRACULA

Tod Browning directed many horror films in his career (the year after *Dracula*, he made *Freaks*, one of the most acclaimed—and disturbing—products of the genre), but in 1931 he was just embarking on this aspect of his career. He apparently didn't think much of the screenplay, which differs in some substantial respects from the novel. However, the film's greatest coup was the casting of Lugosi, who set the tone for the Vampire King for an entire generation. Newspapers reported that audience members fainted in horror, contributing to the film's success.

PAYING DRACULA

It was said that Bela Lugosi was so obsessed with playing Dracula in the film version that he served as a mediator for Florence Stoker in negotiating the rights with Universal Pictures. Once rights were obtained, Universal tried to hire several other actors, much to Lugosi's dismay. When director Tod Browning was hired, Universal was hoping that Lon Chaney Jr. would accept the role but he passed away in 1930, after which Lugosi agreed to a nominal fee to play the Count, receiving a paltry $500 a week for the seven-week production.

Driven by the success of *Dracula*, during the thirties and forties Universal Pictures dominated the horror front, continuing with films like *Dracula's Daughter*, *Son of Dracula*, *House of Frankenstein*, and *House of Dracula*. But by the late 1950s, the vampire film re-emerged in a new and more graphic form. On that front there was but one name—Hammer.

HAMMERING OUT HORROR

In 1913 in Hammersmith, London, Enrique Carreras purchased his first in a line of cinemas. Three years later he partnered with William Hinds; in 1934 they formed Hammer Productions, and a year later Exclusive Films Ltd. as a distribution company. They immediately began making films, but were halted by the onset of World War II and couldn't continue distributing productions through Exclusive until 1945. Two years later, Hammer was revived and in 1949 became Hammer Film Productions Limited.

The turning point came in 1957, when the studio unleashed director Terence Fisher's *The Curse of Frankenstein* (based on the Mary Shelley novel *Frankenstein*), featuring Peter Cushing as the Baron von Frankenstein and Christopher Lee as the creature. The following year, the same trio teamed up for *Horror of Dracula*, which proved to be just the vehicle Hammer needed to solidify its position as the premiere horror film producers of the day. Both films were incredibly successful and would provide a starting point for a number of sequels and successive films. *Horror of Dracula* in particular is said to have raked in more than eight times the cost of the film's production. *Horror* and the Hammer Films to come were in color, adding to the visual appeal of the set designs and, of course, the blood. The film also marked the collaboration of director Terence Fisher, writer Jimmy Sangster, and the duo who are without a doubt the most legendary pair in horror history—Christopher Lee and Peter Cushing.

Heart-Pounding Horror

The 1960s would prove to be an interesting decade for Hammer Films. While the 1960 *The Brides of Dracula* was one of Hammer's most popular in their vampire franchise, it met with mixed reviews, particularly since it lacked the tall, dark, and dangerous presence of Christopher Lee.

“Lon Chaney and Boris Karloff didn’t like the word ‘horror.’ They, like I, went for the French description: ‘the theatre of the fantastique.’”

—CHRISTOPHER LEE, BRITISH ACTOR

A trio of other vampire films would follow *Brides*, including *Kiss of the Vampire* (1963), which featured Hammer’s first female vampire in Noel Willman, *Dracula: Prince of Darkness* (1966), and *Dracula Has Risen from the Grave* (1968). *Prince of Darkness* marked Christopher Lee’s long-awaited return to the role he made famous. In what amounted to a nonspeaking, mostly hissing role, Lee again teamed with director Terence Fisher and writer Jimmy Sangster, and channeled his inner brute to terrorize two couples who happened upon his castle. Dracula met his inevitable end in the climax of the film, this time in icy waters. However, he was unintentionally revived in *Dracula Has Risen from the Grave* by a priest who himself plunged into the water, his blood reawakening the black devil.

CLOAK OF THE VAMPIRE

In a remarkable turn, the cloak that Christopher Lee originally wore during the filming of *The Horror of Dracula* was found in October 2007 in a London dress shop. Missing for three decades, the cape, which was verified by Lee himself as the original, is valued at upwards of $44,000.

Hammer’s first vampiric offering in the seventies was the 1970 film *Taste the Blood of Dracula*. Starring Christopher Lee, this installment saw his big bad

bloodsucking self yet again resurrected, this time by a Satanist, Lord Courtley, who procured the Count's ring and cloak, and a vial of Dracula's blood. In the film, set in Victorian England and focused on Victorian aristocracy, Courtley is hell-bent on reviving the dark devil and draws a trio of bored cohorts into his schemes. His three companions, horrified (somewhat belatedly) by his plans, beat him to death and flee, but they are too late to see Courtley's body transformed into the Count. So begins Dracula's insatiable lust for revenge as he determines to kill the progeny of each of his servant's three murderers. Later that year, Lee reprised his role in *Scars of Dracula*. Again resurrected with the help of a bat dripping blood on his immortal ashes, a sadistic Dracula torments a village until he is at last struck by lightning.

Also released in 1970 was Hammer's *The Vampire Lovers*, featuring lesbian vampire Ingrid Pitt in a surreal and erotic tale loosely based on Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu's *Carmilla* (see Chapter 8). The next year featured *Countess Dracula*, with Pitt basing her character on the evil Countess Erzsébet Báthory (see Chapter 12). This was followed by *Lust for a Vampire* (the sequel to *The Vampire Lovers*), directed by Jimmy Sangster. In 1971, Peter Cushing attempted to squash the evils of vampirism in *Twins of Evil*, which again made use of Le Fanu's *Carmilla* characters.

Then in 1972 came *Vampire Circus*, in which a vampire seeks revenge upon a plague-ridden village, and the sixth Christopher Lee performance in *Dracula a.d. 1972*, a more contemporary outing that reunited Lee with Cushing as his interminable foe, Dr. Abraham Van Helsing. Taking place in twentieth-century London, the film introduced Van Helsing's granddaughter, Jessica, who would also take part in Lee's final Dracula film, *Satanic Rites of Dracula*, in 1973.

After *Satanic Rites*, Lee bid adieu to his most famous Hammer alter ego. Following the release of *Captain Kronos: Vampire Hunter* in 1974, Hammer Films, realizing that gothic horror had run its course, ceased its productions of vampire cinema.

RISE OF THE VAMPIRE

The vacuum left by Hammer was quickly filled with a variety of vampire films crossing over into the comedy, sci-fi, and Western genres. The sixties and seventies also marked the beginning of vampires on television, with the serial *Dark Shadows* and made-for-television versions such as the 1979 *Dracula* starring Jack Palance.

The Vampire by Sir Philip Burne-Jones, 1897

Vampires were now slinking their way directly into our living rooms—and audiences loved it. Vampires came onto the screen in every shape, sex, and size, whether as Catherine Deneuve's Egyptian vampire in *The Hunger* (1983), a brood of raucous teens in *The Lost Boys* (1987), a vampire hunter named *Blade* (1998), Anne Rice's Lestat in *Interview with the Vampire* (1994), or another

incarnation of Vlad the Impaler via Gary Oldman in *Bram Stoker's Dracula* (1992).

Of the vampire films of the 1980s, a handful still maintain rankings on the all-time list, including Jim Carrey's 1985 comedy *Once Bitten*, the Jeff Goldblum vampire spoof *Transylvania 6-5000*, also in 1985, and the frightening brood of Southern bloodsuckers featured in Kathryn Bigelow's 1987 offering *Near Dark*. What did prove to be a box-office success in 1987 was director Joel Schumacher's *The Lost Boys*, a vamp flick with decidedly more comedy than drama that pits teen vampires against teen vampire hunters in a small coastal community dubbed the "murder capital of the world." A cult fave to be certain, the film grossed over $32 million.

In the twenty-first century, notable entries in the genre have included:

- *The Forsaken* (2001)
- *Van Helsing* (2004)
- *Underworld* (2003), featuring an eternal battle between vampires and werewolves
- *BloodRayne* (2006)
- *The Thirst* (2006)
- *30 Days of Night* (2007)
- *Kiss of the Damned* (2013)

Forward or Backward?

In the 1990s, two films made a significant attempt to stimulate the vampire genre. One looked backward for inspiration to the most famous of all vampire legends; the other took a more modern twist.

Francis Ford Coppola's 1992 version of *Bram Stoker's Dracula* is a stylish and taut retelling of Stoker's masterpiece with an exceptional cast and stellar performance by Gary Oldman, who as Prince Vlad is arguably one of the best vampires ever to grace the silver screen.

This telling begins in 1462 in Transylvania when Dracula, who is really Vlad the Impaler, loses his true love. The film jumps to the late 1800s when the vampire imprisons Jonathan Harker (Keanu Reeves) and embarks to London to pursue Harker's fiancée Mina, the reincarnation of Vlad's beloved wife Elisabeta. Along the way, Vlad must deal with the traditional Stoker characters and match wits with Abraham Van Helsing, a role owned by the brilliant Anthony Hopkins. It should also be noted that Tom Waits's performance as Renfield is perhaps one of the most underrated of the film. With its stunning visual appeal, tense story line and action sequences, and strong sexual undercurrent, this rendition was seen by many as the definitive version of the original Dracula story.

Two years later, in 1994, yet another blockbuster bloodsucker arrived in the long-awaited film adaptation of Anne Rice's best-selling novel *Interview with the Vampire: The Vampire Chronicles*. To great controversy, Tom Cruise was cast as the charismatic Lestat (Brad Pitt assumed the role of Lestat's disciple Louis). Much ado was publicly made by Rice herself when the final casting was announced, but she later recanted her comments after viewing the film. What appeared on the screen was a lush—though not entirely accurate—portrayal of Lestat. *Interview* is largely faithful to the novel and rife with the interplay of Lestat's arrogance matched up against Louis's pensiveness and the wicked countenance of their adopted "daughter" Claudia, played by Kirsten Dunst.

"Oh Lestat, you deserved everything that's ever happened to you. You better not die. You might actually go to hell."

—*The Vampire Lestat* by Anne Rice

CASTING LESTAT

The casting of Anne Rice's Lestat in *Interview with the Vampire* was a matter of speculation since its publication in 1976. During the late seventies it was John Travolta who was said to have been slated as the film's star. Rice herself over the years made mention of Rutger Hauer, Jeremy Irons, and Daniel Day-Lewis taking part. It's also said that for the big-screen version, Johnny Depp was offered the part.

FUN WITH VAMPIRISM

Not all vampire films take themselves seriously. Movies such as *Plan 9 from Outer Space* and the bizarre *Atom Age Vampire* did, but fortunately we don't have to.

Over the decades, many filmmakers have made attempts at vampire comedy (not to mention those whose efforts have had unintentionally comic results). Several of the more well-known send-ups are:

- *Tempi duri per i vampiri* aka *Hard Times for Dracula* (1959)
- *The Fearless Vampire Killers* (1967)
- *Blood for Dracula* (1974)
- *Vampira* (1974)
- *Dracula and Son* (1976, based on the Claude Klotz novel *Paris Vampire*)
- *Once Bitten* (1985)
- *Mr. Vampire* (1985)
- *I Married a Vampire* (1987)
- *My Grandpa Is a Vampire* (1992)
- *Innocent Blood* (1992)
- *Vampire in Brooklyn* (1995)
- *Karmina* (1996)
- *Bordello of Blood* (1996)

Among the most successful of this genre is the 1992 film *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, which follows the exploits of a cheerleader turned vampire hunter, and *Love at First Bite* (1979).

Love at First Bite

What many consider to be the definitive classic of the vampire spoof genre arrived in the form of tanned actor George Hamilton. The actor gave an over-the-top performance as an ages-old nosferatu attempting to meld into modern-day New York City. *Love at First Bite* made a strong attempt to update the vampire films of old with a distinctly modern edge. Few fans of the vampire genre will forget Hamilton retiring to his coffin, which is equipped with a nightlight, or his heavily accented classic lines, including "Children of the night … shut up!" or "How would you like to be dressed as a headwaiter for the last 700 years?"

"When other little girls wanted to be ballet dancers, I kind of wanted to be a vampire."

—Angelina Jolie, American actress

Count Kronos

Yet another cult favorite graced the big screen in this decade, offering up a new take on the vampire hunter and setting a standard for those who would follow. The 1974 film *Captain Kronos: Vampire Hunter* features dashing German actor Horst Janson as the suave and debonair Kronos, and John Cater as his hunchbacked sidekick Professor Grost. What makes this outing so fun and memorable is director Brian Clemens's melding of several film genres, most notably a type of Western with hints of traditional mystery, romance, science fiction, and Count of Monte Cristo swordplay all interwoven amid a steady dose of drama and cliché.

Chasing a vampire who has the ability to literally meld into society by virtue of being unaffected by sunlight leaves Kronos to suss out who could be wiping out local villagers. It should be noted that Clemens was the primary writer and

associate producer for the 1960s smash series *The Avengers*, a fact that plays heavily into the playful plot line and humorous tongue-in-cheek detail *Kronos* offers. For true vampire aficionados, *Captain Kronos* is a must-see.

SHADOW OF THE VAMPIRE

In 2000, vampire aficionados were treated to *Shadow of the Vampire*, a film that paid its respects to the 1922 silent film classic *Nosferatu*. In *Shadow*, Willem Dafoe takes on the role of Max Schreck, the actor who played Count Orlok in *Nosferatu*, and the purported real-life turmoil that came with his relationship to *Nosferatu's* director F.W. Murnau (played by the appropriately creepy John Malkovich) during the silent film's production. So compelling was Dafoe's performance that he garnered an Oscar nomination for Best Actor.

In the new millennium, a new kind of female vampire made her way onto the big screen. Kate Beckinsale transformed herself into Selene, the rebellious "death dealer" and star of 2003's *Underworld* and its sequels, *Underworld: Evolution* (2006); *Underworld: Rise of the Lycans* (2009); and *Underworld: Awakening* (2012). The series is premised on an age-old war between vampires and Lycans (a species of werewolf), and Beckinsale was the kind of sexy, leather-wearing, gun-wielding heroine that a new generation wanted to see.

MOON GODDESS

In Greek mythology, Selene is the goddess of the moon in all its phases, representing the fullness of life. Selene was also the name of the vampire in *La Ville Vampire*, written by French novelist and dramatist Paul Féval in 1874, which featured a band of vampire hunters led by renowned gothic novelist Ann Radcliffe.

Along those same lines, only with a distinctly futuristic sci-fi bent, is Milla Jovovich's turn in the 2006 tour de force *Ultraviolet*. In the film, Violet stands alone amid a raging war between a late-twenty-first-century totalitarian government and a subfaction of individuals at the bad end of biological warfare experimentation that resulted in a vampirelike disease. With its graphic novel style, primary colors, and *Matrix/Æon Flux*–type aura, *Ultraviolet* is one of the most succulent and mind-blowing films to date.

In another twist, the 2007 film *30 Days of Night* presented vampires that were deadly but certainly not sexy. The film was based on an interesting premise: What would happen to an arctic town that during the winter stays dark for thirty days? The answer is sheer mayhem when a band of ruthless bloodsuckers shows up with the express purpose of wiping out the entire population.

Beginning in 2008, Stephenie Meyer's wildly successful Twilight novels appeared in movie theaters around the country. They were:

- *Twilight* (2008)
- *The Twilight Saga: New Moon* (2009)
- *The Twilight Saga: Eclipse* (2010)
- *The Twilight Saga: Breaking Dawn* (2011)

Although the films were spectacularly successful at the box office, critical response was generally negative. The movies made thousands of new fans for the series, but they also confirmed what critics had said: that the story was silly,

the heroine insipid, and the vampires so decidedly “unvampire like” as to be laughable. Still, there’s no question that the Twilight books and films continued to generate interest in vampires.

CHAPTER 10
Vampires in Television

AS IS OBVIOUS by the incredibly rich history of vampiric cinema, vampires lend themselves well to a visual medium. While made-for-TV vampires have always been around, it wasn't until recent decades that they've begun to gain an immortal following. In this chapter we take a closer look at prime-time preternatural beings, and the bitingly good small-screen vampires who keep us mesmerized on a weekly basis.

EARLY TELEVISION VAMPIRES

As we've learned in the previous chapters, the vampire has left more than few prominent bite marks on the silver screen, with a film legacy beginning in the silent era. Because of that, it's easy to see why, with the onset of television, vampires gained even more exposure as those classic films finally made it into our collective living rooms. As more and more people became exposed to vampires, so too did television programmers plot how they could expose these bloodsucking creatures to a wider public, using everything from cartoons to made-for-TV movies to weekly serials and even soap operas. It was indeed a soap opera that showed television watchers how truly mesmerizing a small-screen vamp could be. But audiences got their first official taste of television vampires in the form of comedy, from a wacky family known as the Munsters.

THE MUNSTERS

The year 1964 marks the arrival of two of the most unusual and legendary families to ever show up on the small screen—the eccentric and macabre *Addams Family* and the lovable bunch known as *The Munsters*. Paying homage to the horror genre by spoofing some of its most delicious characters and concepts, both families gave audiences two years of solid laughs and a new appreciation for the humor of what most individuals conceive as horrifying. Without a doubt, *The Munsters* provided a brilliant way of easing the public into accepting vampires as leading characters. Fred Gwynne, Yvonne De Carlo, Al Lewis, Butch Patrick, and Pat Priest were respectively transformed into Frankenstein, father/daughter Dracula relatives, a werewolf progeny, and a perfectly human niece.

Housed together in their spooky abode at 1313 Mockingbird Lane, the Munsters had everything monsters could hope for: a Grandpa who hung from the rafters like a bat, a pet bat named Igor, a dragon named Spot, and even a car nicknamed “Drag-u-la.” Even legendary Dracula portrayer John Carradine made a few guest appearances as one of Herman’s bosses at the funeral parlor where he worked. Even funnier was the opening segment to the show, which featured Lily parodying the opener to *The Donna Reed Show*, expressing the notion that the Munsters were just like any other red-blooded American family. Though the series, like *The Addams Family*, only lasted two seasons, it left an indelible mark on television history, with reruns still playing daily. Even more amazing is the fact that Herman Munster was ranked nineteenth in *TV Guide*’s June 2004 issue of “The 50 Greatest TV Dads of All Time.”

DARK SHADOWS—THE ORIGINAL

In 1966, television audiences were treated to a new kind of vampire, a more dark and dramatic breed whose sinister past envelopes him like a dark cloak. That bloodsucker was Barnabas Collins, and he was the star of the gothic television soap opera *Dark Shadows*. It's no surprise, of course, that soap operas have huge followings, with fans hanging on every actor's word, action, interview, and convention appearance. *Dark Shadows*, however, struggled to find an audience, and after six months it was faced with cancellation. Although the show had creepy gothic elements, viewers weren't interested in the tribulations of its heroine, Victoria Winters (played by Alexandra Moltke), as she searched for clues about her parentage, while serving as nanny to the Collins family of Collinsport, Maine.

Jonathan Frid as Barnabas Collins, *Dark Shadows*, 1968

At that point, the show's producers and writers had a brain wave. When a sinister semicriminal shows up at Collinwood Mansion, he finds a secret room

containing a chained coffin. When he unlocks the chains and throws them back, the coffin lid rises, and a long, thin hand grips his throat. Barnabas Collins, the 200-year-old family vampire, has awoken. This was only the beginning, as the show's writers felt free to people the show with ghosts, witches, and werewolves. However, of all the supernatural denizens, Barnabas remained by far the most popular.

Running every weekday afternoon on ABC from June of 1966 through April of 1971, the original *Dark Shadows* became a cult classic that to this day retains its immortality through major Internet fan sites, fan clubs, societies, conventions, CD audio dramas, DVDs, reruns, and a pair of feature-length films: *House of Dark Shadows* in 1970 and *Night of Dark Shadows* in 1971. The series also spawned a short-lived television remake in 1991, comic books, and a slew of serialized novels.

DARK SCANDAL

Alexandra Moltke, the actress who played Victoria Winters on *Dark Shadows*, was caught up in a real-life dark drama when she had an affair with British socialite Claus von Bülow. In 1982 Von Bülow was tried and convicted of the attempted murder of his wife, Sunny, presumably in an effort to get her out of the way so he could marry Moltke. Von Bülow appealed the conviction and was eventually acquitted.

Dark Shadows had a live-to-tape format (occasionally resulting in unintentionally hilarious bloopers) with complex overlapping character arcs, time travel, séances, a parallel universe, ghosts, witches, werewolves, and dream and fantasy sequences that took the story from present-day Collinsport, Maine, to its colonial roots in the 1700s. Throughout all of the plot lines spread over 1,200 episodes, the actors involved played multiple roles—typically their own ancestors—squeezing out every ounce of melodrama they could manage. So

groundbreaking was the series that even Robert Cobert's eerie soundtrack ranked on Billboard's Top 20 charts in 1969, with one of the tracks earning Cobert a Grammy nomination.

CHARLIE'S VAMPIRES?

Dark Shadows launched several television careers, including that of Kate Jackson, one of the original *Charlie's Angels*. From 1970 to 1971, Jackson portrayed Daphne Harridge in seventy episodes. Also appearing on the series as Sheriff Patterson was Dana Elcar, best known for his character of Pete Thornton for seven seasons of the popular series *MacGyver*, beginning in 1985.

Dark Shadows Redux

Dark Shadows was canceled in 1971, but its cult following relentlessly clamored for more. The show was partially syndicated in 1975 and aired in syndication through 1990. For the next three years, all of the episodes were released to and aired by Syfy. In 1991, twenty years after its cancellation, NBC ran a short-lived remake of the series in prime time. Again directed by Dan Curtis, and starring Ben Cross as Barnabas, Jean Simmons, Lysette Anthony, and 1960s scream queen Barbara Steele, the revival was a weekly series with a big budget. Timing in this case proved its undoing, as Gulf War coverage caused the show to be pre-empted and rescheduled at odd times, contributing to its demise after only a dozen episodes.

Dark Shadows Returns—Again

As a child, actor Johnny Depp had been obsessed with *Dark Shadows*. In 2007 when Warner Brothers acquired the film rights, he persuaded his friend Tim Burton to direct. The result was 2012's *Dark Shadows*, starring Depp as Barnabas, Michelle Pfeiffer as Elizabeth Collins

Stoddard, Helena Bonham Carter as Dr. Julia Hoffman, Bella Heathcote as Victoria Winters, and Eva Green as Angelique Bouchard, the eighteenth-century witch who turns Barnabas into a vampire.

Barnabas Collins: Do not fear, my child. I simply seek advice on the art of courting a woman of this time … Land. And who better to tutor me than a woman of your age? What is your age, if I may?

Carolyn Stoddard: Fifteen.

Barnabas Collins: Fifteen and no husband. You must put those birthing hips to good use at once lest your womb shrivel up and die.

Carolyn Stoddard: You're weird.

—*Dark Shadows*, 2012

MADE-FOR-TELEVISION VAMPIRES

Over the decades, dozens of made-for-television vampire movies have crossed all genres, ranging from the 1966 comedy *Munster, Go Home!* to *Mom's Got a Date with a Vampire* (2000). Never a week goes by without some vampire flick being shown on the small screen. As with all genres, there are always a few gems hidden in a mountain of cubic zirconia.

The Night Stalker

That first gem was an unlikely 1972 television movie that spun off into a wildly popular late-night television series. The movie was *The Night Stalker*, starring Darren McGavin as Carl Kolchak, the intrepid, bumbling, and relentlessly persistent reporter who attracts evil supernatural creatures like a rotting corpse draws *vrykolakas*. With a teleplay written by *I Am Legend* author Richard Matheson based on a novel by Jeff Rice, and directed by *Dark Shadows* creator Dan Curtis, the aptly titled *The Night Stalker* (no doubt referring to both the protagonist and antagonist) was enormously successful for ABC. In the film, Kolchak finds himself up against ancient Romanian vampire Janos Skorzeny, who's prowling Vegas and sucking dry a score of young women until Kolchak himself stakes him.

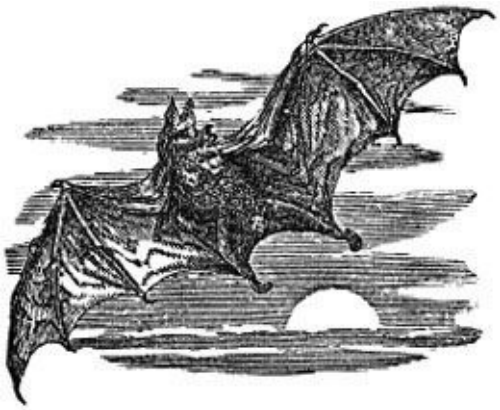
In 1973, McGavin, Curtis, Matheson, and Rice once again teamed up for another Kolchak foray, *The Night Strangler*. The year 1974 marked the premiere of the television series *Kolchak: The Night Stalker*, with its third episode, entitled "The Vampire," paying homage to Kolchak's vampire-killing skills with a prostitute-turned-bloodsucker running amok in Las Vegas. The show was canceled due to mediocre ratings, though it found a cult following. In September 2005, a remake of *Night Stalker* briefly appeared, featuring *Queen of the Damned* star Stuart Townsend, but, sadly, it was pulled after only six episodes.

No doubt Kolchak himself would've attested that *some* things are better left untold.

Dracula Returns

Another shining gem in the television vampiric realm is Jack Palance, who in 1973 donned cape and fangs to play Dracula in a winning version of Bram Stoker's novel, pulled together by the same people who gave us *Night Stalker*, director Dan Curtis and author Richard Matheson. As the legendary bloodsucker, Palance is by many accounts one of the best to ever play the role, his smoky voice coupled with his overpowering physical presence allowing him a command and confidence that only a select few Dracula portrayers have been able to channel.

In 1977, another television vampire of note took to the small screen in the form of renowned French actor Louis Jourdan, who starred in *Count Dracula*, a version produced by the BBC for its Great Performances series. Closely following Bram Stoker's legendary novel—more than most adaptations—Jourdan brought many of the same subtleties to his Count as Frank Langella did to his 1979 portrayal.



A Whole Lot of Fun

Also premiering in prime time in 1979 was the adaptation of Stephen King's vampire extravaganza *'Salem's Lot* (see Chapter 8). Starring David Soul, James Mason, and Lance Kerwin, *'Salem's Lot*, like many of King's horror adaptations, has become a cult favorite in the vampire realm.

In 1989, Ben Cross took yet another turn in the coffin, playing Vlad to Maryam d'Abo's vampiric Angelique in the dark comedy *Nightlife*. Written by *Saturday Night Live* Emmy-winning writer Anne Beatts, the amusing romp finds Angelique ditching Vlad and awakening in Mexico City after a 100-year nap only to find that vampires are merely considered "diseased individuals." Of course, falling in love with her doctor creates a love triangle that makes for a bloody good time.

FANGS ACROSS THE YEARS

Over the years, many of television's most highly rated prime-time shows have featured vampires in their repertoire. *Alfred Hitchcock Presents*, *Night Gallery*, *Tales from the Crypt*, *Tales from the Darkside*, *The Twilight Zone*, *The Man from U.N.C.L.E.*, *Starsky and Hutch*, *The Hardy Boys/Nancy Drew Mysteries*, *Buck Rogers in the 25th Century*, *CSI: Crime Scene Investigation*, *Sabrina*, *the Teenage Witch*, *The X-Files*, and *Crossing Jordan* have all embraced the immortal undead.

PRIME-TIME BLOODSUCKERS

Given the nature of vampires, specifically their propensities for bloodlust, eroticism, and murder, it's easy to see why creatures of the night have a tough time getting past television censors. Besides *Dark Shadows* a few other series attempted to rise from the grave with short-lived success, including *Dracula: The Series* (1990), *Kindred: The Embraced* (1996), and more recently, a single season of the 2007 drama *Moonlight* featuring a vampire private investigator.

But along the way, there have been a few highly successful vampire-based series whose characters have television immortality.

DR. WHO AND THE VAMPIRES

Across the pond, the long-running British science fiction series *Dr. Who* mixed it up with vampires in a 2010 episode titled "The Vampires of Venice." The doctor and his companions travel to sixteenth-century Venice and run afoul of a group of mostly female vampires. In the end, the vampires turn out to be aliens from another planet, and the doctor succeeds, with his usual combination of ingenuity and brazenness, in persuading them to leave.

Forever Knight

In 1989, the CBS made-for-TV movie *Nick Knight* gave us our first glimpse of one of the more tortured reluctant vampires ever conceived. The film starred musician and former *General Hospital* heartthrob Rick Springfield as a four-centuries-old vampire working in Los Angeles as a detective solving a host of grisly murders involving victims being drained of blood. In 1992, the pilot was remade into the late-night series *Forever Knight*, with the affable Welsh-Canadian actor Geraint Wyn Davies assuming the lead role of homicide

detective Nicholas Knight. Primarily a Canadian production, the plot differed from the pilot in that it was based in Toronto and Nicholas was now 800 years old, a fact that only added to his extreme angst in trying to make restitution for his evil past and ultimately rid himself of his vampirism. He was helped in his quest by pathologist and close mortal confidant Natalie Lambert (Catherine Disher), who stood in contrast to Nick's vampiric confidant and former lover Janette (Deborah Duchene).

Complicating matters throughout *Forever Knight*'s three-season run is Nick's maker, the intensely philosophical and wickedly sinister Lucien LaCroix, brilliantly played by Nigel Bennett. A 2,000-year-old former Roman army general made in Pompeii during the eruption of Mount Vesuvius, LaCroix's obvious disdain for Nick's quest for absolution and humanity beautifully portrays the misuse of vampiric power and its alternate usefulness as a tool for creating a better society. Like many traditional vampires, those in *Forever Knight* have superhuman strength, hypnotic powers, heightened senses, and the typical aversion to sunlight and staking. They also possess the capacity for flight, moving at great speeds, and tissue regeneration.

RALLYING FAN BASE

It can be said that fans of *Forever Knight* are as dedicated and fervent as they come. On more than one occasion, it was the show's intense fan base that saved it from cancellation. In 1995, a lobbyist group called the Friends of *Forever Knight* pushed their case all the way to the National Association of Television Programming Executives, who were utterly astonished and impressed by their professionalism and efforts to save the series.

What has arguably endeared *Forever Knight* to the hearts of all vampire aficionados, aside from the various love/hate triangles and vampiric antagonists, is the constant interplay between Nick and LaCroix, whose toying with mortals

leads him to moonlight as the Nightcrawler, a late-night radio host, in which his broadcasts invariably shed light on Nick's all-consuming pathos and fight to control his bloodlust and rage. Indoctrinated into the undead by LaCroix in 1228, Nicholas de Brabant remains one of the more high-profile vampires ever to grace the small screen.

"Vampires are sexy to a woman perhaps because the fantasy is similar to that of the man on the white horse sweeping her off to paradise."

—FRANK LANGELLA, AMERICAN ACTOR

Buffy the Vampire Slayer

When it comes to Valley Girls turned vampire hunters there's only one name that comes to mind: Buffy. In 1992, writer Joss Whedon introduced us to the self-obsessed, flitty, shopaholic cheerleader Buffy Summers in the feature-length film *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*. Cute and campy, the film starred Kristy Swanson, Donald Sutherland, and Rutger Hauer as the evil Lothos. Though Buffy proved

successful at the box office, it was decidedly a flop in Whedon's mind, as his intent was not to create a high-school horror romp but an extraordinary character of staunch female embodiment.

Five years later, in 1997, Whedon got his chance as executive producer of the series *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, which premiered on the small WB Network. For seven seasons, the Emmy-winning series gave us an empowered Buffy (played by Sarah Michelle Gellar), who kicked all kinds of demonic and vampiric butt in her hometown of Sunnydale, California, and beyond, focusing primarily on the "Hellmouth," a demonic gateway below Sunnydale High.

Amid all the campy comedy, drama, paranormal terror, and martial arts wrapped around scores of vampires and other malfeasants, Buffy came to know Angel, played by the ever-charming David Boreanaz, whose badass vampire rears its ugly head when he and Buffy engage in a night of passion. Tragic and metaphorical in its subtext, this meeting of vampire and vampire slayer proved so successful that it launched a spinoff, simply titled *Angel*.

Part of the charm of the show, aside from the lightning-fast repartee of its characters, was that it presented viewers with an intrepid band of vampire hunters mixed with the dynamics of high-school social life. These included Willow Rosenberg, Xander Harris, Cordelia Chase, and Buffy's "Watcher," Rupert Giles.

Together the gang struggled through such traumatic events as Buffy's failed romance, the destruction of Sunnydale High School (right after their graduation), and Buffy's death and resurrection. Along the way, they fought not only vampires but demons, witches, and various other hellspawn.

Giles: Buffy told me you don't feed from humans anymore.

Angel: Not for a long while.

Giles: Is that why you're here? To see her?

Angel: I can't. It's, uh … It's too hard for me to be around her.

Giles: A vampire in love with a Slayer. It's rather poetic … in a maudlin sort of way.

—*Buffy the Vampire Slayer* (1997)

"Every vampire fiction reinvents vampires to its own needs. You take what you want."

—Joss Whedon, creator of *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* and *Angel*

Angel

Premiering in 1999 on the WB, *Angel* highlighted the triumphs and tortured soul of the 200-year-old vampire Angelus, who spent his first millennia killing with reckless abandon but who, courtesy of a band of revenge-minded gypsies,

had his human soul restored to his vampire body. An exceptional twist on vampire lore, Angel was tormented by the zeitgeist of his murderous ways and driven to help others as a private investigator in a quest to alleviate his eternal angst and remorse. With *Buffy* creator Joss Whedon at the show's helm, David Boreanaz shone as this tortured creature, whose somber reckonings, memories, and killings offer up the reluctant vampire unwilling to forfeit his immortality so that he can continue making restitution to humanity.

Darker in its conception than *Buffy*, *Angel* benefited from crossover characters including Buffy herself. Told in a serial format like most serial drama, with self-contained tales that add to a more powerful long-term story line, Angel held to the same standard as other television vampires such as Nick Knight and *Moonlight*'s Mick St. John: despite being a creature based in evil, his intent was to accomplish good. Upon its cancellation, and prompted by fan outrage, *Angel*'s ambiguous ending resulted in a 2007 comic book series called *Angel: After the Fall*.

True Blood

True Blood, based on the Sookie Stackhouse series written by author Charlaine Harris, was an almost immediate hit when it launched on HBO. With its September 2008 premiere, *True Blood* introduced the world to the inhabitants of Bon Temps, a fictional town in Louisiana that is home to eccentric, reluctantly telepathic waitress Sookie Stackhouse, played by Oscar-winner Anna Paquin, and the man she falls in love with, Bill Compton (played by Stephen Moyer), who just happens to be a 173-year-old vampire. Of course, the fact that Bill's 148 years older than Sookie matters little, considering that vampires, courtesy of the invention of synthetic blood by Japanese scientists, have now become accepted in society.

MISTRESS OF THE DARK

Though it’s not officially listed in Webster’s, the word *Elvira* is by definition a raven-haired, ultra-campy cult classic beauty clad in skimpy, tight-fitting, cleavage-enhancing black dresses, who since 1981 has been pushing her vampire shtick with unbelievable fun and immortal aplomb.

CHAPTER 11
Vampires in Games

THE SPREAD OF video gaming has been accompanied by an expansion of vampires, who often feature in games, either as opponents or, on occasion, as playable characters. In this chapter, we look at some of the most notable games—whether tabletop role-playing, collectible card, or video—that feature the creatures of the night.

DUNGEONS & DRAGONS

When *Dungeons & Dragons* was first published in the mid-1970s, game aficionados had to adjust to a completely different kind of game. In a role-playing game such as *D&D*, there are no "winners" and "losers"; it is the players against the game itself, having soul-stirring adventures, battling monsters, and searching for treasure.

The game's creators, Gary Gygax and Dave Arneson, were enthusiastic fantasy fans, steeped in the traditions of otherworldly adventure, and they made sure that the game was filled with a liberal sprinkling of monsters of every description.

Vampires were among the earliest monsters introduced to *D&D*, appearing in the "white box" set in 1974 and in the first edition of the game's *Monster Manual*, published in 1977. Throughout subsequent editions of the most famous role-playing game in the world, vampires regularly appeared as monsters that the players could fight.

Ravenloft

In 1983, TSR (the company that published *D&D*) presented a standalone module titled *Ravenloft*. The module featured a vampire as its central character: Strahd von Zarovich. The character was unashamedly based on Dracula but also created his own mythology. Strahd, a nobleman, fought various enemies during his life but at last retired to the kingdom of Barovia and took up residence in Castle Ravenloft. However, darkness entered his soul when he fell passionately in love with his brother Sergei's fiancée, a young woman named Tatyana. In an effort to restore his youth and win her love, Strahd made a pact with Death. On his brother's wedding day, Strahd murdered Sergei and pursued Tatyana. The terrified girl threw herself from the castle's battlements. Strahd was killed by his

own castle guard but discovered that as a result of his pact with Death, he could not die but instead had become a vampire.

Barovia was surrounded by mysterious mists through which no one could pass. The land, ruled by its vampire lord, was cut off and removed from the rest of the world. For all eternity, Strahd was doomed to pursue women who seemed to embody Tatyana—but in each case the woman died tragically, and his love was never fulfilled.

STRAHD LIVES ON

The *Ravenloft* module spawned other game products from TSR, as well as a series of novels about Strahd (including several by noted vampiric author P.N. Elrod) and other inhabitants of Barovia. In 2010, Wizards of the Coast released the *Castle Ravenloft* board game.

THE SPREAD OF VAMPIRE GAMING

Because *D&D* was so influential in the world of gaming—both in tabletop games and later in video games—it was only natural that vampires would spread across the world of games. Among the most important to take up this challenge was White Wolf Publishing.

> "I think with vampires, you can't really go wrong. For generations, vampires have been a hit because they're unobtainable, mysterious, sensual, dangerous, kind of sexy."
>
> —Ashley Greene, American actress

White Wolf

The company, founded in 1991, focused from the beginning on the popular goth culture, which included a considerable interest in vampires and vampire lore. Young goths wore black and often sported tattoos and body piercings that featured themes such as vampires, skulls, skeletons, and other morbid symbols. Goth's most important contribution to vampire lore came in the form of the game *Vampire: The Masquerade*. The game is part of a larger setting called World of Darkness.

Vampires in *V:TM* (as the game is known to its players) belong to one of thirteen clans. These are:

CLAN	SYMBOL
Assamite	

Brujah	
Followers of Set	
Gangrel	
Giovanni	
Lasombra	
Malkavian	
Nosferatu	
Ravnos	
Toreador	
Tremere	
Tzimisce	
Ventrue	

Members of the clans form factions (or “sects”), and the shifting pattern of alliances offers many opportunities for intriguing among the players. None of the

alliances offers many opportunities for intriguing among the players. None of the sects is entirely good or bad. Instead, they are devoted to what members view as their own interests. Vampires refer to one another as “Kindred”; their origin lies with the blood of Cain, the first murderer.

V:TM also spun off a collectable card game (called *Vampire: The Eternal Struggle*) and a series of novels. In 1994 White Wolf published a new game, *Vampire: The Requiem*, which used many of the same themes and some of the game elements of *V:TM*.

Kindred: The Embraced

As mentioned in Chapter 10, in 1996 the Fox television channel ran eight episodes of a series called *Kindred: The Embraced*, based on *V:TM*. The series focused on an uneasy alliance between a police captain who becomes aware of the vampires’ existence and the “prince of the vampires,” who seeks to control his subjects and prevent a war between them.

VIDEO GAMES

The rapid expansion of video gaming in the 1990s and beyond naturally meant that many of the elements of role-playing games would find their way to video consoles and computers. This was true of vampires. Among the video games to feature bloodsuckers are:

- *Blade* (2000)
- *BloodRayne* (2002, 2004)
- *Countdown Vampires* (1999)
- *Darkwatch* (2005)
- *Dracula* (in several different incarnations)
- *Ghost House* (1986)
- *Legacy of Kain* (1996–2003)
- *Night Trap* (1992)
- *Nosferatu* (2003)
- *Vampire Hunter D* (1999)
- *Vampire: The Masquerade* (1991, 1992, 1998, 2011)
- *Van Helsing* (2004)

DHAMPIRS

Several video games, notably *Blade* and *Vampire Hunter D*, featured *dhampirs*, the offspring of vampires and humans. The concept originates in Balkan folklore, one of the few places, apparently, where vampires are sexually attracted to women to the point of not killing them. Dhampirs are also notably featured in the young adult series Vampire Academy.

CHAPTER 12
Great Vampires of History

HROUGHOUT THE CENTURIES there have been numerous accounts of alleged encounters with vampires. Though the majority are the stuff of myth, there are a few documented incidents that have gained a measure of credibility. In this chapter, we examine a few of the better-known fiends and the chain of events surrounding their untimely deaths—and rebirth into the undead.

THE CHRONICLES OF WILLIAM OF NEWBURGH

A careful chronicler of English history between 1066 and 1098, William of Newburgh is generally considered to be among the most accurate contemporary authorities of the twelfth century, having compiled the highly regarded *History of English Affairs* toward the end of his life in 1198. Newburgh was steadfast, and more than a little pompous, in his determination to record historically accurate events, and he vociferously denounced historians who relied on mythology and hearsay in their endeavors to educate the literate public. His was among the very few accounts found in English literature written by a distinguished historian that relate the existence of revenants—quite literally, the walking dead.

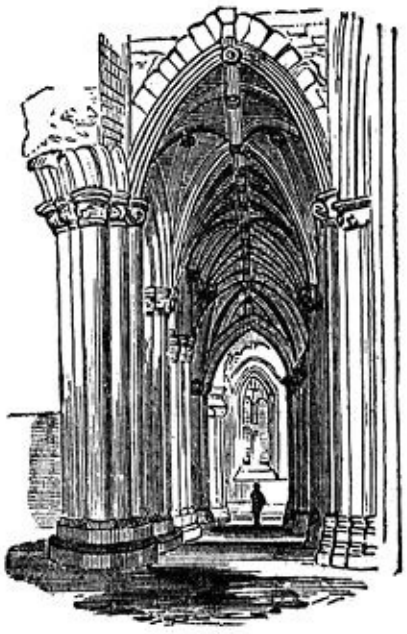
The Vampires of Buckinghamshire and Berwick

Newburgh's first account of the undead is set in the English county of Buckinghamshire, where a deceased man returned to his wife's bed and laid upon her, nearly crushing her with his weight. When she fought him off, the man proceeded to terrorize the rest of his family and neighbors for many days. After complaints to the clergy, the bishop Hugh of Lincoln, who would later be sainted by the Church, sent a written absolution to be placed on the man's corpse. Apparently, the religious curative worked, and the man's walking corpse ceased harassing the villagers.

Later, another deceased fellow in the town of Berwick on the northern tip of England, who was reputed to have been very wealthy and graced with an evil temperament, reportedly began creeping from his grave to roam the streets at night, dogs furiously nipping at his heels. Within days the panicked townsmen solved their dilemma by digging up the corpse as it "slept" during the day and burning it to ashes.

The Cleric Vampire of Melrose Abbey

One of the most startling stories of the undead that came to William of Newburgh's attention was that of a chaplain who worked for a noblewoman near Melrose Abbey in Scotland, and who'd essentially ignored his religious duties during life, preferring to spend his days hunting with hounds on horseback. Shortly after the cleric's death, he began appearing at Melrose Abbey, but his attempts to enter were thwarted by the abbey's sanctity. Soon he appeared in the chambers of the noblewoman he'd failed to serve as a member of the clergy and haunted her with cries of anguish.



The frightened noblewoman beseeched a ranking monk from the abbey to put a stop to the corpse's nightly terrors, and he vowed to stand guard over the grave. As the tale goes, the man's corpse rose from the grave and attacked the monk, who responded with several panicked swings of the axe he carried. The defeated creature returned to his grave, which opened to receive him and then closed around him. The following day, a group of monks returned to the gravesite to exhume the disruptive corpse and burn it. When they recovered the body, they noticed with horror the slash marks of the axe and a growing pool of blood inside the casket.

blood inside the casket.

The Vampire of Alnwick

The final vampirish ghoul to appear in William of Newburgh's chronicles became known as the Vampire of Alnwick, and had developed an evil reputation as a cruel and mean-spirited man during his lifetime. On his last night on earth in human form, this lost soul had crept onto his own rooftop in an effort to spy on his wife through the window of her chambers, with the apparent expectation of catching her in the act of an adulterous affair. He slipped from the roof and fell to the earth, dying in agony the following day.

Soon after the poor man's burial, the people in the town of Alnwick began reporting the ghastly sight of the man's corpse wandering through the streets. Almost immediately, a plague swept through Alnwick, and as the death toll mounted, an increasing sense of panic ensued. The revenant was held accountable for the disease, and his corpse, enormously engorged with black bile and blood, was burned to ashes. Coincidence or not, the epidemic ceased, which was held as proof that the undead and damned had indeed plagued the people of Alnwick.

MORE MEDIEVAL VAMPIRES

In Prostˇejov, the Czech Republic, in 1991, archaeologists excavating in an ancient church discovered a body that had been buried in a coffin reinforced with iron bars. As well, the corpse's legs had been piled with stones and the torso was cut from the legs. The burial took place in the sixteenth century, when the townspeople were evidently taking no chances with vampires rising from the dead.

"Evil is a point of view. God kills indiscriminately and so

shall we. For no creatures under God are as we are, none so like him as ourselves.”

—LESTAT, *INTERVIEW WITH THE VAMPIRE* BY ANNE RICE

ERZSÉBET BÁTHORY

Since the dawn of man there have been, and shall always be, murderers who possess an unquenchable obsession with blood. Yet among those deviants a sixteenth-century woman stands alone in her madness, sadism, and the number of lives she destroyed. Though accounts of her crimes vary among experts, most generally agree that her blood obsession is part of vampire legend—and she was real. Her name is Countess Erzsébet “Elizabeth” Báthory, often known as the Countess of Blood or Blood Countess, born into Hungarian royalty in 1560.

Báthory’s family coat of arms

The Family That Slays Together …

Alleged to be a woman of great beauty, Báthory seems to have suffered as a child, perhaps from epilepsy. She was also of a lineage rife with madness; close relatives were rumored to practice witchcraft, alchemy, and Satanism. This evil was perpetuated by her marriage at age fifteen to Count Ferenc Nádasdy, a man who readily shared his sadistic ways with Báthory, making their castles and various homes houses of pain and torment. The majority of torture was handed out to poor servant girls, whom the count is said to have left outside, tied up, and covered with honey to endure the stings of insects. During harsh winters, another

favorite practice was to place naked girls outside, exposed to the elements, and pour water over them until they became human ice cubes. So strong was Báthory's drive for torture and blood that she practiced all forms of supernatural arts and indeed accelerated her murders long after her husband died in 1604 and she'd holed up in one of her Hungarian estates.

THE BÁTHORY LEGACY

Ghost Hunters International, a popular Syfy series that visits purportedly haunted sites throughout the world, visited the Báthory Ruins at Csejte Castle in an episode that aired on August 18, 2008. Many visitors have claimed to feel the presence of Báthory while at the castle; however the *GHI* team was unable to find any evidence of paranormal happenings.

Few dared oppose Báthory, much less expose her proclivities lest they risk losing their own lives. So for many years an unknown number of females, from children to women, simply disappeared. What's known from the writings and speculations of experts, accounts of the day, and the countess's much heralded trial, is that the alleged tortures that took place are even by today's standards so extreme as to be almost unbelievable. She seems to have been motivated by blood and the effect she believed it had on her beauty and countenance—not to mention the sheer joy of torturing girls and watching them die.

Cruel and Unusual

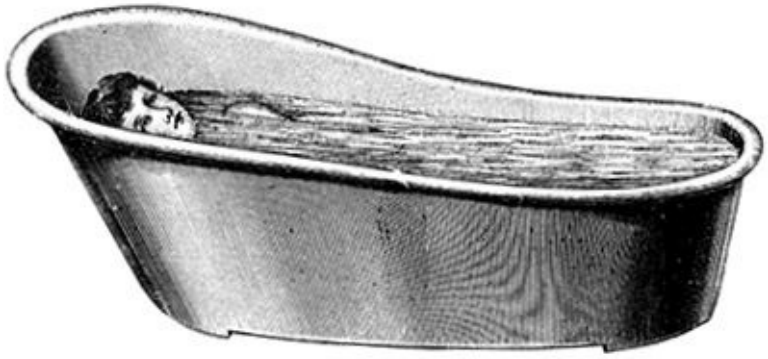
The unfortunate victims of both Báthory and her cohorts endured a gamut of pain. The torturers removed and manipulated various body parts with scissors, broke bones, used hot pokers, and drained their victims' blood, burned them, ate their flesh or forced them to consume their own flesh, and beat them until they mercifully died. An eighteenth-century account of Báthory says that she actually bathed in the blood of her victims in an effort to retain her youth and vitality,

though this fact is never mentioned in her trial notes and cannot be established with any certainty. What's obvious, however, is her insatiable thirst for blood, coupled with the cruelty, sadism, and raw animalistic nature of the worst kind of predator.

The Price of Immortality

With many serial murderers, there comes at some point an arrogance and belief in invincibility that causes them to make an error. As Báthory focused her murderous efforts less on lower-class peasants and more on girls of various noble families, rumors spread, and in 1609, the Countess of Blood was at last stopped. Her compound was raided and victims were found dead, tortured, and dying, and even more imprisoned. Báthory's despicable practices became horrifically apparent.

Two trials were held in an effort to convict or clear the countess, at which many victims and cohorts testified to the gory and brutal details of torture and murder. Estimates of her murders vary; she was prosecuted for eighty deaths but may have killed as many as 650. If accurate, that number would make her one of the most successful serial killers in history. For her part, the countess insisted upon her innocence, stating that the girls died from disease. But that mattered little. Báthory was found guilty and died three years later, still isolated in the walled-up rooms of her castle.



HENRY MORE

A pre-eminent contributor to the study of metaphysics and to the Cambridge Platonists, an assembly of theorists at Cambridge University who defied Puritan dogma and promoted the concept that religion and rationality were harmonious, Henry More wrote dozens of respected philosophical treatises during his life. Among those was *An Antidote Against Atheism*, written at the age of thirty-nine in 1653, in which he discussed ghosts, witches, and, of course, revenants and vampires. Not since the distinguished works of William of Newburgh had a major English author attempted to chronicle the world of the undead. The ghoulish characters that More documented offer an intriguing glimpse of the malignant malefactors who fouled the night air of early England.

The Shoemaker of Breslau

One of More's reports of the ghastly doings of the undead in 1590 involved a shoemaker in the town of Breslau (Wrocław), in the Lower Silesia region of Poland, who'd violated religious law by slashing his own throat. His relatives are said to have washed his blood-spattered body and covered his wounds with burial linens in an effort to convince the presiding priest that the man had died of natural causes. After being buried with Christian ceremony, rumors of the shoemaker's suicide began to circulate, and under pressure from the Church, the family confessed that he'd indeed committed suicide.

As the clerics pondered the contradictory situation of a suicide victim having been consecrated against Church custom, the shoemaker's corpse arose from its grave and began terrorizing the townspeople. The hauntings continued for several months until the church authorities ordered his body exhumed and placed on display for six days. Still, the stubborn shoemaker continued his nightly harassments, so his body was buried in an unmarked grave under the hangman's gallows in an effort to keep him still.

RUMBLING SPIRITS

The term *poltergeist* has become inextricably linked with the trilogy of highly successful *Poltergeist* films made in the 1980s in which seemingly mischievous spirits become increasingly malevolent. The word comes from the German *poltern*, which means “to rumble,” and *geist*, meaning “ghostly spirit.” The nighttime nuisances of lost souls who roam the earth creating physical disturbances are the work of poltergeists, and the vampirish undead are part of the club.

After suffering another month of nighttime rantings and disturbance through the city streets, the townspeople and authorities were completely fed up. They disinterred the shoemaker’s corpse once again, and this time they cut off his arms, legs, and head, and cut out his heart, which was recorded to be “as fresh and entire as in a calf newly killed.” The shoemaker’s dismembered body was cremated, and the soul of the man who would become known as the Breslau Vampire was finally at peace.

The Pentsch Vampire

Another of Henry More’s historical tales is set in the region of Silesia in the Polish town of Pentsch in 1655. Johannes Cuntius (sometimes spelled Cuntze), a town alderman, had been severely kicked in the groin by a horse and succumbed after days of agony and complaining about his sinful life. On his deathbed, a black cat is said to have entered the room and scratched his face—a bad omen indeed. After Cuntius’s burial, Pentsch was plagued with vicious poltergeist-like pranks, violent visitations on inhabitants, the attempted strangling of elderly men, and horror stories of infants being bashed to death.

The frightened townspeople exhumed the corpses of several of the most recently deceased for examination and found that all had decomposed except that of the alderman’s. His skin was said to be “tender and florid” and “a staff being put in his hand, he grasped it with his fingers very tightly.” After nearly

being put in his hand, he grasped it with his fingers very tightly." After nearly six months in the grave, Cuntius's still "fresh" corpse was burnt, putting an end to the misery of his malevolent vampiric wanderings.

PETER PLOGOJOWITZ

In 1725, Peter Plogojowitz, an average man of little distinction, passed away and was buried in the Rahm district of Kisilova, Serbia. Just over a week later, a mysterious twenty-four-hour illness, which some reported as involving a loss of blood, struck nine villagers of varying ages, resulting in their deaths. Plogojowitz's wife claimed that her dearly departed husband had paid her a visit in order to collect his shoes (some accounts claim he visited his son for food on several occasions and when refusing his father, the son died). This substantiated the reports—prior to their demise—from those who fell ill, that Plogojowitz not only visited them, but attempted to strangle them.

As is often done in these situations, Plogojowitz was exhumed to ascertain if he bore typical vampiric signs, including a lack of decomposition, a ruddy complexion, fingernails and hair showing growth, and the presence of fresh blood. With the cooperation of authorities and military personnel, the poor man was dug up, and according to accounts did indeed bear the telltale signs of a vampire. Some of his skin had sloughed off to show new skin underneath, his hair and nails had grown, there was blood near his mouth, and he appeared relatively intact. It should come as no surprise that his appearance was cause for panic and anger.

LACK OF DECOMPOSITION?

By definition, *decomposition* is the decay of a dead body or any organic matter. Where folkloric vampires and other corpses were concerned, few if any onlookers surmised that perhaps the bloating due to internal gasses and buildup of fluids accounted for the frightening groans and spurting blood that a corpse emitted as it was being staked.

A Grave Decision

The authority (as author Paul Barber cites, the “Imperial Provisor”) of the district and the clergyman who oversaw the exhumation were faced with villagers who took matters into their own hands—literally. Plogojowitz’s corpse was staked through the heart, after which it was reported that fresh blood leaked from his chest and out the mouth and ears. The corpse was promptly set alight and burned to ash. Naturally, this gave cause for all of his alleged victims to also be exhumed and measures taken, such as garlic stuffed in their mouths, to make certain they would rest in peace.

“We all recognised the Count—in every way, even to the scar on his forehead. With his left hand he held both Mrs. Harker’s hands, keeping them away with her arms at full tension; his right hand gripped her by the back of

at full tension, the right hand gripped her by the back of the neck, forcing her face down on his bosom. Her white nightdress was smeared with blood, and a thin stream trickled down the man's bare breast which was shown by his torn-open dress. The attitude of the two had a terrible resemblance to a child forcing a kitten's nose into a saucer of milk to compel it to drink."

—Dr. Seward, *Dracula* by Bram Stoker

ARNOD PAOLE

Two years after the Peter Plogojowitz case, another incident occurred that became even more famous, in part as a result of Austrian regimental field surgeon Johannes Flückinger's widely read report entitled *Visum et Repertum* (alternately translated as "Seen and Heard" or "Seen and Discovered"), which was published and presented to the Austrian emperor in 1732. Flückinger's report, which states that vampires did indeed exist, focused on a Serbian vampire epidemic. The initial vampire in this instance was Serbian soldier Arnod Paole (also cited as Arnold Paul). Though accounts vary, the story goes that in 1727, Paole returned home to the village of Medvegia (also spelled Meduegna) on the outskirts of Belgrade. It's said that Paole himself told of an encounter he'd had with a vampire while stationed in Greece, which was then known as Turkish Serbia (other accounts describe this incident as Paole having had a dream). The *Repertum* states that Paole "had eaten from the earth of the vampire's grave and had smeared himself with the vampire's blood, in order to be free of the vexation he had suffered." Unfortunately for the former soldier, his "cure" proved futile, and he allegedly spread his tall tale around the village—a seemingly harmless endeavor that would prove to be his undoing.

Stake Out

Not long after arriving home, Paole died as a result of falling off a hay wagon. A month or so after his interment, local villagers made known that Arnod Paole was not going peacefully into that good night. He was, in fact, troubling them and was allegedly responsible for four killings. As with Peter Plogojowitz, these accusations became grounds for digging up Paole to examine his corpse for signs of vampirism, which they did forty days after his burial. According to the *Repertum*, the villagers found that Paole was "quite complete and undecayed, and that fresh blood had flowed from his eyes, nose, mouth, and ears; that the

shirt, the covering, and the coffin were completely bloody; that the old nails on his hands and feet, along with the skin, had fallen off, and that new ones had grown." As was customary, a stake was driven through Paole's heart and he "gave an audible groan and bled copiously." Afterward he was burned to ashes.

AFTER THE FACT

It should be noted that Johannes Flückinger's investigation took place almost five years *after* Paole's death and destruction, thereby basing his report on villagers' accounts of what occurred at the time.

The Medvegia Vampires

Whereas the Plogojowitz case ended with his burning, Paole's did not. The panic his alleged vampirism caused and the resulting exhumation, observation, and destruction of the chain reaction of victims afflicted by vampirism gave those victims the dubious title of the Medvegia Vampires. The corpses of his four victims were also dispatched. But it didn't stop there. Common wisdom dictated that Paole must have fed upon local cattle, and since villagers consumed their cattle, *they* were also infected and in danger of becoming bloodsuckers. The *Repertum* states that within three months, seventeen individuals perished within two or three days as a result of illness. One even cited a fellow deceased villager as her attacker. As one would expect, all of the unfortunate deceased were exhumed, and Flückinger's report is highly detailed in regard to each corpse's condition. The few that were simply decomposed were reinterred; however, the majority of the Medvegia Vampires were summarily decapitated, burned, and their ashes thrown into the river.

THE VAMPIRE OF CROGLIN GRANGE

It would be remiss not to mention the legend of the Vampire of Croglin Grange, which has gained significant notoriety over the centuries. Rife with intrigue, horror, and a bloodthirsty creature from hell, the story came to light in the late 1800s courtesy of Augustus Hare, in his memoirs succinctly titled *The Story of My Life*. The tale was told to Hare by Captain Fisher, the owner of a one-story country home called Croglin Grange in Cumberland, England. The Fishers rented the home to three siblings, two brothers and their sister, who were very popular among both the poor and wealthy of the community. One exceedingly hot summer night, the sister retired but couldn't sleep. Looking out the window, she noticed two odd lights in the distance—lights that came closer and closer until they manifested themselves into a horrific creature with a "hideous brown face with flaming eyes" staring and scratching at her window. Making its way inside, it attacked the poor woman, inflicting upon her a ghastly throat wound that nearly killed her. One of her brothers saw the beast retreat over into the neighboring churchyard.

Reasoning that the "creature" was an escaped lunatic, the siblings recuperated for a time in Switzerland before returning to the Grange. However, months after their return, the creature reappeared at the sister's window. This time the brothers were prepared, and one shot it in the leg as it again made for the churchyard. The following day, a group of locals opened an old vault at the churchyard, emptying the contents of each coffin until they at last came upon a creature described as "brown, withered, shriveled, and mummified." It had a gunshot wound to its leg. In true vampire-sendoff fashion, the creature was burned.

Though far more dramatic and terrifying in its original publication, Hare's story provoked serious terror, while at the same time gathering a coffin-ful of criticism from those who said the incident was pure fiction. It wasn't until the 1900s that a few intrepid souls set out to find the truth of the matter and debunk

1900s that a few intrepid souls set out to find the truth of the matter and debunk each other, beginning in 1924 with Charles G. Harper. Upon traveling to Cumberland, Harper discovered only a Croglin Low Hall and a Croglin High Hall and nary a church in sight for over a mile. In the 1930s, F. Clive-Ross set out to debunk Harper, coming to the conclusion that the Low Hall once had a chapel in close proximity.

Three decades later, in 1968, D. Scott Rogo came up with a different angle, suggesting that Hare's Croglin tale mimicked that of James Malcolm Rymer's 1847 penny dreadful *Varney the Vampyre*. Rogo's big revelation, however, was that Hare's Croglin Grange incident actually occurred in the 1680s! In recent years author Lionel Fanthorpe uncovered research showing that a vault near the Grange was destroyed during the Cromwellian period in English history. Whether the vampire actually existed remains uncertain.

FANGS FOR THE MEMORIES

The legends and accounts of alleged vampires such as Erzsébet Báthory, Peter Plogojowitz, Arnod Paole, and all of the other fiends we've discussed hold a significant, if not dubious, place in the vampire Hall of Fame. In the next chapter, we further explore those deviants, whose criminally vampiric exploits caused panic among modern-day populations and whose actions to this day remain unbelievable in their ferocity and bloodlust.

CHAPTER 13
Vampire Crimes

OVER THE CENTURIES, many criminals have committed or attempted murders by draining or drinking the blood of their victims. Some truly believed they were vampires; others were looking for the thrill of the blood. The Vampire of London, the Vampire of Hannover, and the Düsseldorf Vampire are a few of the infamous serial killers who used bloodletting and blood-drinking to satisfy their murderous thirst.

EARLY VAMPIRIC CRIMES

There's much to be said about the crimes committed by those individuals who for various reasons believed they were vampires or claimed influence by vampires. There's no firm answer as to why an individual defiles another human being in the name of blood, but over time we've been able to ascertain certain commonalities among these outrages.

Gilles de Rais

One of the most notorious and shocking examples of bloodletting, torture, and murder—which included admissions of sadistic vampirism—centered on French nobleman Gilles de Montmorency-Laval, Baron de Rais, who had the distinction of having fought alongside Joan of Arc. In 1435, after inheriting a fortune, de Rais left the military at the age of thirty-one and retired to his estate, where he lived lavishly, delved into the occult and Satanism, and began a gruesome campaign of slaughtering at least 50, and likely well over 100, young boys in hideously conceived, blood-soaked sacrificial ceremonies.

Portrait of Gilles de Rais by Éloi Firmin Féron, 1835

In 1440, de Rais was dragged before the French court after an ecclesiastical investigation showed evidence of his depravities, and he was forced to confess details of crimes so repulsive the magistrate ordered that the most disturbing revelations be struck from the record. News of the trial and the lurid tales of his blood-drinking, cannibalism, and monstrous sexual perversions provoked public horror and outrage. The sadistic de Rais was found guilty and hanged, but the infamy of his barbarism earned him legendary notoriety as a living vampire with inhuman tastes in mayhem.

BLOOD MANIA

Hematomania is a term identified with an individual who's psychologically obsessed with blood. Some modern-day "vampires" claim to suffer from this type of erotic bloodlust. One might argue that Gilles de Rais or Countess Erzsébet Báthory (see Chapter 12) were plagued by a type of hematomania spurred on by obvious psychological disorders.

STAKING A CLAIM

There are always varying accounts of a crime. When vampirism is involved, and there are added incidents of cannibalism, necrophilia, witchcraft, and lycanthropy, the truth gets that much murkier. The evil torturer Erzsébet Báthory, discussed in Chapter 12, was, sadly, not alone in her bloodlust, madness, and murder. Many sadists, cannibals, necrophiles, and torturers have walked the planet, among them the infamous Marquis de Sade (for which sadism is named); the "Rostov Ripper," Andrei Chikatilo; Jeffrey Dahmer; and Ted Bundy, to name a few.

> "Believe in angels? Then believe in vampires. Believe in me. There are worse things on earth."
>
> —*Memnoch the Devil* by Anne Rice

A wide range of documented cases of vampiric crimes surfaced during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, running the gamut from Frenchman Martin Dumollard, who was convicted and executed in 1861 for murdering several young girls and drinking their blood, to sixteen-year-old New Yorker and self-proclaimed vampire Salvador Agron who donned a Bela Lugosi get-up and randomly stabbed two young boys in 1959. Typical of many of the cases involving alleged vampirism are a variety of psychological and behavioral disorders, including a lack of remorse, promiscuity, domination, childhood abuse, and all measure of perversion and deception in order to accomplish their bloody goals. Though there are dozens of cases of alleged vampires, a few stand out because of their bizarre nature:

- Frenchman Joseph Vacher of Bourge undertook a walking tour of the country and along the way killed a dozen individuals by biting their necks and drinking their blood. He was convicted and executed in 1898.
- In 1920, Russian baron Roman von Ungren-Sternberg wasn't convicted of, or even charged with, murder, but was known for drinking human blood, presumably against his victims' wishes. He claimed that he was Genghis Khan reincarnated. A change in government put him out of favor with the new regime and he was finally executed.
- In Argentina in 1960, Florencio Roque Fernandez was identified by fifteen women as the man who assaulted them in their bedrooms to drink their blood.
- James Riva suffered from the belief that consuming blood would give him immortal life. He also claimed to hear a vampiric voice. In 1980, Riva shot and killed his wheelchair-bound grandmother and then allegedly drank her blood.
- In 1998, Joshua Rudiger, a self-professed vampire residing in Oakland, California, became the Vampire Slasher, preying upon the homeless, attacking them and slashing their throats with a knife. He wounded three men and killed one woman in San Francisco. According to news accounts, he said of the killings that "prey is prey." Rudiger believed he was a vampire who was two millennia old and who needed the blood to "obtain vitality."

MURDER EXPOSED BY WAR

Hungarian soldier Béla Kiss had a nasty habit during the early 1900s, but it wasn't until after his alleged death during World War I that his evil deeds were discovered. Within nineteen or more metal drums, army officers found the bodies of missing persons, two of whom were Kiss's wife and her lover. Each of the victims had been strangled, had

puncture wounds on their necks, and were drained of their blood.

THE VAMPIRE OF LONDON

In March 1949, London's *Daily Mirror* ran a series of stories entitled "Hunt for the Vampire," which detailed the disappearance of several area residents and the arrest of the man believed responsible for their deaths. That man was John George Haigh, and shortly after his arrest, he confessed to killing six people and dissolving their remains in acid to hide the evidence. He claimed that his motive for the murders was a compulsion for blood. Authorities were inclined to believe otherwise, leaving the matter to be settled in court in a sensational, gruesome trial that earned Haigh the title of the Vampire of London.

Fenced In

John Haigh was born in 1909 in Wakefield, England, and raised by parents who were members of the Plymouth Brethren, which practiced extreme isolationism from society. Haigh's fundamentalist parents instilled in him an overwhelming impression of Christ bleeding on the cross and the saving grace of that blood—an image that would haunt his nightmares, and that in turn would become the nightmares of his victims. During his childhood, Haigh's life was stifled and largely confined to the family home, surrounded by a ten-foot-tall fence to keep him from the outside world.

For years Haigh's life seemed uneventful; he held a series of odd jobs until he reached the age of forty and lived in South Kensington. One day, he told a close female friend that his neighbor, sixty-nine-year-old Olive Durand-Deacon, had missed a business meeting with him and he hadn't seen her for a day. Haigh took the friend to the police to file a report, and once Scotland Yard received the report they quickly learned that Haigh had a lengthy record for fraud, forgery, and theft. While the mannerly Haigh calmly expressed his concern for Olive's well-being, the police launched an investigation into his business where he conducted so-called "experimental work." When searching the business, they

found containers of sulfuric acid, a chemical-stained apron, rubber gloves and boots, a gas mask, and vats full of “sludge.”

CALIFORNIA VAMPIRE

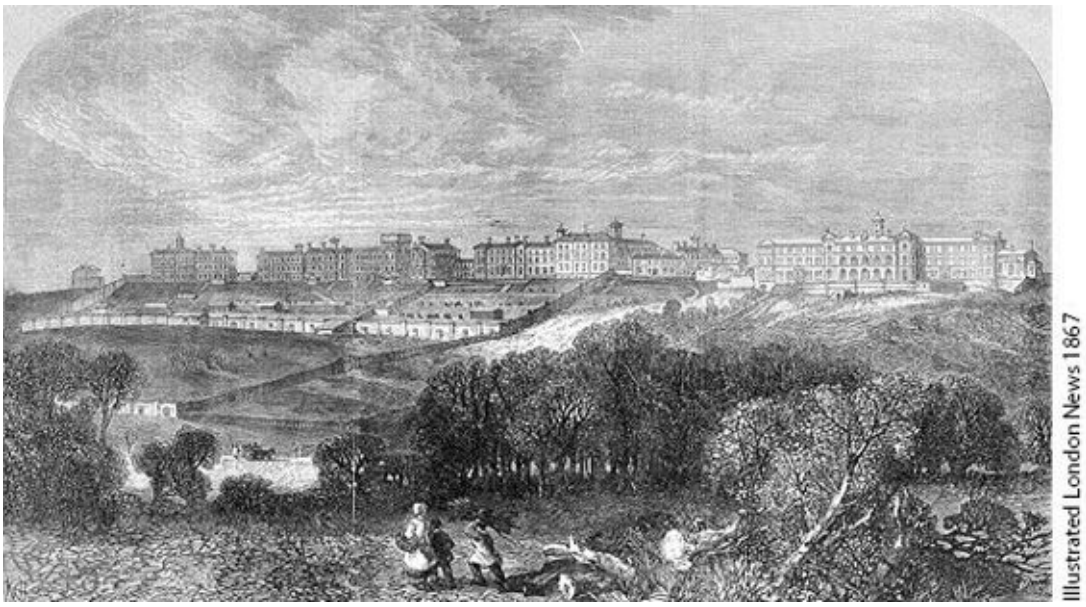
Known as the Vampire of Sacramento, Richard Trenton Chase suffered from the delusion that he needed to drink and bathe in blood, *and* eat the raw organs of his victims to prevent Nazis from transforming his own blood into powder. Chase was so certain of his Nazi theory, he asked renowned profiler Robert Ressler for a radar gun, with which Chase believed he could shoot down Nazi UFOs and force *them* to stand trial for the murders. After his conviction for the murder of six people, Chase was sentenced to life in prison. In 1980, Chase committed suicide in his cell with an overdose of prescribed antidepressants.

Ticket to Ride

Haigh was finally arrested after pawning jewelry to a suspicious dealer, who took it to the police. They identified it as the property of Olive Durand-Deacon. During his interrogation, Haigh surprised detectives by asking what the odds were of being relegated to the Broadmoor Asylum for the Criminally Insane. Apparently assuming he’d discovered a loophole in the legal system, Haigh was utterly convinced that he couldn’t be prosecuted without a corpse for evidence. He calmly confessed to murdering Durand-Deacon and dissolving her body in acid. As he dictated the gruesome details of Olive’s death and the dissolving, Haigh was so self-assured that he confessed to the murders and disposals of eight more people using the same technique. He claimed that he had to kill to survive and had slit the throats of all of his victims so that he could drink their blood.

The media sensation prior to Haigh’s trial was immense, as the killer reveled in descriptions of him as a blood-crazed vampire. In his mind, he was

in descriptions of him as a blood-crazed vampire. In his mind, he was untouchable and above the law, and he was certain that without bodily evidence he would be acquitted, or at the very least, placed into a mental institution from which he would eventually be released.



Asylum for Criminal Lunatics, Broadmoor, Sandhurst, Berkshire, 1867

Haigh was wrong on both counts. Forensic examinations of the “sludge” found at his workplace yielded intact dentures belonging to Olive Durand-Deacon. Durand-Deacon’s lipstick container and her bloodstained coat were also discovered, along with blood on knives, walls, and Haigh’s own shirtsleeve. A team of psychiatrists—including those for the defense—established that Haigh was certainly paranoid, but was faking his insanity, although there was little dispute that the monster’s fascination with blood began during his youth with visions of a bloodied Christ. The jury found him guilty of murder in twelve minutes, and the “vampire” John Haigh was hanged on August 6, 1949.

THE CHAMBER OF HORRORS

John Haigh’s final questionable glory in life was answering a request from Madame Marie Tussaud to fit him for a death mask before he was hanged, an event that ironically took place just a year before her own

passing. The delighted mass murderer was more than happy to comply and even provided her with his own suit in which to clothe his wax figure for display in the museum’s Chamber of Horrors.

THE VAMPIRE OF HANNOVER

During the 1920s, the German city of Hannover was the hunting ground of Fritz Haarmann, one of the most notorious vampiric serial killers of all time—and it would be years before the discovery that the fiend had been committing his grisly crimes right under the noses of the police. The first evidence of Haarmann's butchery emerged in May 1924, on the banks of the River Leine, which runs through the city. A growing number of human bones and skulls began washing onto the riverbanks. These gruesome discoveries coincided with a groundswell of rumors that human flesh was being peddled on the black market—a fact that raised a public outcry to find the monster who was littering their city with human remains.

A Match Made in Hell

At the age of forty-one, Fritz Haarmann was only one of a long list of "rehabilitated" sex offenders who roamed the streets of Hannover, having been imprisoned for nine months in 1920 for molesting a young boy. Arrested for the crime in 1918, Haarmann had been discovered by detectives in his bed with the boy while the police were searching for another missing child. To their horror, they would learn many years later that while they were arresting Haarmann, the decapitated head of the child for whom they were searching was in the same dwelling, wrapped in a newspaper and stuffed behind the stove.

After Haarmann was released from jail, he renewed an enamored relationship with a young, handsome male prostitute named Hans Grans, and the pair soon became inseparable and well-known street figures. Despite Haarmann's sketchy past as a homeless vagrant who'd spent time in his late teens in a mental institution, he and his partner developed reputations as well-dressed, respectable gentlemen who earned a decent living selling used clothing and meat on the underground market that had become a vital source for scarce goods to the

people of war-ravaged Hannover. Unknown to the public, Haarmann supplemented his income as a paid police informant. Also unknown was that the "respectable" gentlemen were a pairing of unspeakable monstrosity.

Arrested Development

Authorities would later learn that Haarmann used his knowledge of the workings of the police to pass himself off as a detective at the Hannover train station, where he would accost homeless runaway boys and frighten them into accompanying him back to his home. Other times, he would offer work or lodging to lure boys to their deaths. But this train station ruse finally proved to be Haarmann's undoing in June 1924, when he became embroiled in a nasty altercation with a boy of fifteen that attracted the attention of railway police. Panicked at police intervention, Haarmann claimed the boy was traveling with false papers in an effort to have him arrested.

The ruse failed, and both were taken to the police station for questioning, where the boy accused Haarmann of sexually harassing him—an accusation that piqued the curiosity of detectives who were working on solving the grim mystery of the sickening discoveries on the riverbank. The detectives searched Haarmann's residence and discovered piles of clothing and property later identified as having belonged to the growing list of missing youngsters. The spreading news of those discoveries led to a flood of evidence: some reported seeing Haarmann leading victims from the train station; others identified clothing of other victims that Haarmann had sold to unsuspecting buyers.

Beware the Butcher

Haarmann broke down under interrogation and confessed to his revolting crimes, taking the police on a macabre tour of the city to show them stashes of discarded bones and skulls. In horrific detail, Haarmann described the blood-curdling methodology of his psychotic rampage, during which he would persuade boys into his home, overpower and rape them, and then sink his teeth

into their windpipes and tear out their throats. After stripping the boys of their clothing, which was later washed and prepared for sale, Haarmann decapitated and butchered the corpses down to the bone and then coldly and neatly packaged the flesh to pass off as pork. It was obvious that the belongings and remains of the victims were the backbone of Haarmann's thriving black market clothing and meat business.

In the sensational trial of the Hannover Vampire that captured the attention of the entire country, Haarmann conducted his own defense and tried to implicate his boy toy, Hans Grans, in the murders. The jury convicted Haarmann of the murder of twenty-four boys and found Grans guilty of luring one poor boy into Haarmann's den of depravity. The number of victims that were accounted for, sadly, was a fraction of the innocents Haarmann had quite literally butchered over a five-year period. Haarmann died for his crimes in April 1925 on the guillotine in Hannover Prison, a decapitation that gave a final ironic twist to the tale.

"Vampires, real vampires, didn't nibble on the necks of nubile young virgins. They tore people to pieces and sucked blood out of the chunks."

—*99 Coffins: A Historical Vampire Tale* by David Wellington

THE ACCOMPLICE

As Fritz Haarmann's live-in lover, there's no question that Hans Grans was fully aware of Haarmann's slaughter of scores of victims, and he undoubtedly helped clean up the mess of butchering them. After Haarmann's execution, Grans went to prison for twelve years for his

Haarmann's execution, Grans went to prison for twelve years for his part in those nightmares and lived the rest of his life in obscurity. He reportedly passed away with little fanfare in 1980.

THE DÜSSELDORF VAMPIRE

In the documented history of the twentieth century, few pathological sadists with a literal thirst for blood can compete with the gruesome rampages of Germany's Peter Kürten. Only after Kürten's capture and confession in 1930 would an appalled world learn that his personal reign of terror had lasted for seventeen blood-soaked years, beginning with the mysterious murder of little Christine Klein in Köln, Germany, in 1913. Until Kürten's capture, it was only known that ten-year-old Christine had been attacked in her bed by a mysterious predator who'd slashed her throat and then sexually molested her. It was one of the few times that the man who'd killed her would leave behind a calling card—a handkerchief bearing the initials of a monster: "P.K."

The only suspect in Christine's death was her uncle Otto, who'd had a violent argument with Christine's father, Peter Klein, after being refused a loan. Otto threatened revenge, and it was theorized that he'd stolen Peter's handkerchief and purposely left it with the child's body as a grisly taunt. Years later, Kürten related that just days after the crime, he'd gone to a café near the scene and listened gleefully to the outraged conversations of the locals over the dead child and her alleged murderer. Although evidence against Otto was nonexistent, he was taken to trial and quickly acquitted. For Kürten, the excitement of the scandal and Otto's deflection of suspicion served to embolden him, as did the excitement he gained by drinking little Christine's blood as it spurted from her slashed throat.

The Dogcatcher

Born as the eldest in a family with an alcoholic and abusive father in 1883, Kürten was raised in poverty in a one-room dwelling where he witnessed his drunken father repeatedly rape and beat his mother and sisters. During that period, Kürten's exposure to abnormality multiplied when he was befriended by

a degenerate dogcatcher who taught him skills that no young mind should ever have been exposed to; namely masturbating and then torturing captured dogs to death. Through their twisted relationship, the pair formed a mutual bond that would cement Kürten's destiny of depravity.

SCREEN LEGACY OF THE DüSSELDORF VAMPIRE

As with all high-profile killers, Peter Kürten's dysfunction has served as the inspiration for several films, including Fritz Lang's 1931 masterpiece *M*, starring Peter Lorre, and the Robert Hossein's 1965 French film *Le Vampire de Düsseldorf*. Fritz Haarmon's case was the basis for the 1973 German film *Die Zärtlichkeit der Wölfe*, aka *Tenderness of the Wolves*.

Solitary Refinement

According to Kürten, his first foray into murder occurred in his early teens while swimming with schoolmates in the Rhine River. Playing on a raft, Kürten held one of the boys under water until he drowned, and when a friend attempted to intervene, Kürten drowned him as well. From there, Kürten moved on to attacking sheep by sodomizing them while he stabbed them with a knife in a frenzy of sexual pleasure and bloody assaults on the helpless creatures, which raised his passions to unimaginably horrendous heights. After running away from home at sixteen, Kürten relied on petty thefts to survive and began an incredible string of twenty-seven relatively short prison sentences during which he would purposely commit infractions so that he'd be tossed into solitary. When alone, his pastime was self-gratification while daydreaming about sadistic perversions.

Incredibly, after one of Kürten's prison stints in 1921 he met and married a woman who knew nothing of her husband's activities. He took a factory job in the city of Altenburg, became active in trade union activities, and kept his

the city of Altenburg, became active in trade union activities, and kept his sadistic impulses under control for several years. That changed when the couple moved to Düsseldorf, where Kürten recalled that "the sunset was blood-red on my return." Kürten took the image as a signal that Düsseldorf would be the perfect place to fulfill his deadly destiny.

"Vanity, thy name is vampire."

—*Proven Guilty* by Jim Butcher

Swan Song

Kürten spent the next four years controlling his atrocious thirsts, although he committed petty thefts and arsons for which he was never apprehended. In 1929, he finally snapped and went on a rampage of berserk assaults on dozens of women, men, and children, sometimes pouring fuel on their corpses and setting them alight. As the body count continued to rise, the city of Düsseldorf went crazy with fearful indignation and disgust. Kürten was finally captured after he lured a young woman named Maria Budlick to his home while his wife was away and asked if he could "have" her. The fortunate woman saved her life by complying—the only woman ever to do so. Astonishingly, Kürten released her. Too frightened to go to authorities, Budlick wrote a letter to a friend detailing the incident, which was misdirected to a woman known as Frau Brückner, who immediately notified the police.

After being questioned, Kürten knew that the worst he could face was a rape charge, but he also knew that deeper investigations would unveil his identity as the man the press had labeled the Düsseldorf Vampire. Although he denied any wrongdoing, Kürten made the amazing decision to confess everything to his wife so that she could turn him in and collect the substantial reward. Kürten's wife met with authorities in May 1930 and he was arrested. He confessed to seventy-

nine chilling murders of women, children, and men, but was brought to trial for only nine. Newspaper reporters scribbled as he reeled off detail after detail of scores of horrific bloodthirsty murders. By his own admission, he often took nighttime strolls along the lake in a city park. In 1930, during one of those forays, he happened upon a swan sleeping on the lakeshore. As evidence to his extreme bloodlust, Kürten, grabbed the swan, cut its throat, and drank from its neck, an action that offered sexual release.

The shell-shocked jury convicted Kürten in less than two hours of deliberation, and he went to the guillotine on July 2, 1932. The Düsseldorf Vampire's last ghastly request in life was to hear the blood gushing from the stump of his neck after his head was lopped off. Just as the monstrosity of Kürten's existence is virtually incomprehensible, the outcome of his final request will forever remain a mystery to the living.

PART 4

VAMPIRES AMONG US

CHAPTER 14
Vampires Today

THOUGH MOST FOLKS don’t believe that vampires exist, there is a growing contingent of individuals who believe they do, and who subscribe to a vampire lifestyle including blood fetishism, or aspects of magnetic, astral, or psychic vampirism. In this chapter, we also examine various types of vampires and an immense range of vampiric practices, commerce, Internet interaction, comic books, and every conceivable item of paraphernalia, from fangs to Bela Lugosi capes.

TYPES OF VAMPIRES

When you're discussing vampires in casual conversation, most people probably think of the portrayal by Bela Lugosi in 1931's *Dracula*. This raises the question "Aren't all bloodsuckers alike?" In a word—no. They aren't. While the majority possess basic characteristics such as bloodlust, a combination of varying powers, and certain weaknesses, each vampire—like each human—has its own cross to bear (so to speak) and its own methods. Let's take a look at some of the more prevalent types of vampires.

THE EXOTIC, EROTIC BLOODSUCKER

By their very nature, vampires are erotic creatures, who with the help of their hypnotic powers can bend just about everyone to do their bidding, sexual or otherwise. After all, biting someone on the neck is itself a highly erotic, personal, and sexual act. What gives the vampire its “romantic” edge are several things. First, if the participant is willing, the romantic notion of immortality acts as an enticement. Then there’s the bad boy/bad girl syndrome that caters to humanity’s wild rebellious side and the knowledge that you have to find out what’s good for you by testing out what is bad for you. Unwilling participants, its often argued, are in a sense being raped—sexually approached and forced to engage in activity against their will. This places the vampire firmly in the sexual deviant category, which goes neck-in-neck with their obsessive stalker personalities.

Homoerotic Tendencies

Vampire sexuality remains a hotly debated subject. Are they straight, homosexual, lesbian, or bisexual? The safe answer is all of the above. While the majority of vampires exhibit no sexual preference when killing, many obsess over one sex or the other when it comes to love. Their choice of companions in many instances of fiction and film, however, can tend toward same-sex companionship. This is evident, for example, in many of the protagonists of Anne Rice’s Vampire Chronicles. Magnus chooses Marius. Marius chooses Lestat. Lestat indoctrinates Louis. While none of them has any issue with taking the lives of either sex, they choose as their companions (or “children,” as they are often termed) a member of their own sex. Is it a love relationship? Of course. Does it involve sex? Sometimes. Whereas the typical vampire romance tends to focus on a male/female relationship or other offshoots such as vampire/vampire hunter, the concept of a homoerotic companionship, though typically not sexual,

provides a seething and unmistakable undertone.

> “Kissing Sinclair was like making out with a sexy timber wolf—he was licking my fangs and nipping me lightly and growling under his breath and it was … oh, it was really something.”
>
> —Betsy Taylor, *Undead and Unwed* by MaryJanice Davidson

Lesbian Vampires

In 1872, the aspect of lesbian vampires was born in Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu’s novella *Carmilla* (see Chapter 8). The vampire Carmilla, masquerading as the evil Countess Mircalla Karnstein, imbued fervent readers with the notion that seductive evil wasn’t just for the so-called stronger sex. Carmilla *is* the mother of all female vampires, and the standard to which all future models adhere. Not only does she possess the necessary vampire characteristics, but Le Fanu’s bold seductive interplay between Carmilla and Laura, the object of her obsession, is slow and smoldering to the point of titillating frenzy:

> *“It was like the ardour of a lover; it embarrassed me; it was hateful and yet over-powering; and with gloating eyes she drew me to her, and her hot lips travelled along my cheek in kisses; and she would whisper, almost in sobs, ‘You are mine, you shall be mine, you and I are one for ever.’”*

Many would argue that the prospect of lesbian vampire seduction is the product of male fantasy—that’s just as true today as it was in the nineteenth century. Even with the certainty that one of the women is intent on taking away her partner’s essence and existence, there are many who wish that they could be part of the encounter. In every sense, the depictions of such scenes invite

part of the encounter. In every sense, the depictions of such scenes invite voyeurism.

LILITH

The figure of Lilith has very old roots in world culture, going back at least to Mesopotamia. In 1895, Scottish fantasist George MacDonald wrote a novel, *Lilith*, portraying her as Adam's first wife. Lilith has vampiric qualities; she sucks the blood of the living for sustenance. At the end of the novel, she is redeemed from sin by God, with the assistance of Adam and Eve.

Lilith by John Collier, 1892

PSYCHE IT TO ME

Using New Age concepts as well as older ideas, some modern thinkers have defended the notion that vampires exist. There are, they argue, sound reasons to believe not only in vampires but in ghosts, shape-shifters, and much more. Parapsychology is a hotly defended discipline, and vampires are an important component.

ON THE MARKET

From fangs to theatrical contact lenses, and capes to white hairspray, the market for vampire paraphernalia is booming with blood-curdling special-effects gear. Going hunting? You can find vampire-slaying kits that include crucifixes, stakes, and mallets, special potions to ward off night stalkers, and even garlicky perfumes with which to anoint yourself.

The Flight of the Astral Body

An early proponent of psychic vampirism, Dion Fortune was a noted writer and occultist during the early to mid-1900s in England. As did many occult theorists of the era, Fortune believed that humans are a combination of two separate entities—the physical body and the spiritual, or *astral*, body. Upon normal death, both entities perish. In her book *Psychic Self-Defense*, Fortune cites a case during World War I in which several eastern European troops had been killed in combat. Among them were practitioners of black magic; they could avoid going to the "Second Death," as she refers to the death of the astral body, and "maintained themselves in the etheric double by vampirising the wounded … systematically drawing its etheric nutriment from him." Regarding the fate of the victims of vampires, Fortune goes on to say: "the person who is

vampirised, being depleted of vitality, is a psychic vacuum, himself absorbing from anyone he comes across in order to refill his depleted sources of vitality."

Much of Fortune's writings imply that there are those who purposely become vampires by practicing black magic, and vampires who become so only because they are victims. She believed that actual vampirism was rare in western Europe and that eastern Europe was the seat of "black magic" and thus the natural homeland of the true vampire.

Undead and Unbled

One of the most common concepts in the variety of theories of psychic vampirism is that people with questionable intentions can purposely drain the energy of their victims without killing them, or without their knowledge or consent. Variously known as *pranic vampires*, *empathic vampires*, *energy parasites*, and *psy-vamps* (also spelled *psi-vamps*), these practitioners often describe their activities in self-congratulatory terms, claiming that they are merely returning to an innocent and traditionally spiritual relationship with other humans.

Part of the argument centers on the idea that modern people have been turned into soulless zombies by an industrialized and heavily controlled world of technology and science, and that the natural human exchange of spiritual energy has been quashed. To achieve a more natural balance in the universe, these psychic vampires believe that the "normal" human condition is for some to yield energy and others to thrive on it. If you ever get the creepy feeling that someone's staring at you and trying to read your mind, beware! They might just be trying to psychically suck you dry instead.

The Vampire by Charles Méryon, 1853

MIND VAMPIRES

In his 1989 novel *Carrion Comfort*, author Dan Simmons suggests the existence of “mind vampires.” These are people who can bend others to their will, playing games with innocent humans. The mind vampires of the novel are virtually immortal (unless someone kills them) and have amused themselves for centuries manipulating world events to suit their fancy. The same author contributed to the mainstream vampire genre with his 1992 novel *Children of the Night*.

WHAT'S YOUR TYPE?

The concept of the blood fetish sounds like a figment of a demented mind. For those who consume blood either as part of a lifestyle or by obsession, there are variations on the theme triggered by separate desires and needs. *Sanguinarians* are people who have a psychological desire to consume blood to maintain their health, and usually do so in a fashion that does not harm others. Those who suffer from clinical vampirism are convinced that they require blood to survive and will get it at any cost, even so far as committing murder. Clinical vampirism is usually associated with far more complex and serious psychological issues such as schizophrenia.

"I am a vampire, and that is the truth."

—*The Last Vampire* by Christopher Pike

BELLY UP TO THE BAR

Since the introduction of the HBO series *True Blood* about vampires in the Deep South, a real bar is doing a booming business in Shreveport, Louisiana. Called "Fangtasia," the bar is rife with vampire-related themes, and the owners insist that they really are vampires. What they *really* are is clever at marketing!

For those who have sunk their teeth into the vampire lifestyle, and who often refer to themselves—at least in print—as *vampyres*, the wish to behave like, or become, vampires can be satiated by interacting with those of a similar propensity. As with most groups of like-minded individuals, the Internet is the

medium of choice for searching out companions. Members of these groups take on the roles of vampires and donors, using various forms of bloodletting that seldom includes actual biting. Donors usually make a small cut in their own skin with a razor blade, and the “vampire” sucks the blood from the wound. Many members of vampire social communities are involved only to act as donors. Non-vampyres are sometimes classified as *swans* and fall into several categories:

- **Black swans:** Encompass families and friends of members who have little to do with vampire activities
- **Crimson swans:** Donors who participate in bloodletting
- **Crystal swans:** Members who donate only psychic or spiritual energy
- **Amber swans:** The jack of all trades, the amber swan donates in every way

FANGS FOR THE CHAT!

For those interested in vampires in general, and those intrigued by the modern vampire culture, that incredible piece of technology sitting on your desk is a gateway to the dark side. Go ahead—type “vampires” into your favorite search engine and you’ll get more than 15 *million* web pages at your disposal. The Internet is a goldmine of lore, research, fiction, film, and vampire enthusiasts seeking companionship. In the chat room arena, you can find plenty of online friends to share your interests with, but we implore you—please—be very wary of Internet relationships. By its very nature, interest in vampires involves delving into the dark side, and there *are* genuine nut cases who lurk in chat rooms and forums, and they can be, in every sense of the word, predatory. Make sure you explore and learn from the many websites concerning Internet safety.

MUSIC FOR NIGHTCRAWLERS

Maybe real vampires have failed to infiltrate society, but there's no question that interest in them has touched virtually every element of the entertainment world, including the musical realm. For the classically minded, original scores to the soundtracks of several vampire films contain absolutely stunning orchestrations. Among the best are the tracks to *Bram Stoker's Dracula*, *The Hunger*, *Interview with the Vampire*, and *Blade*. In the edgier music scene that combines goth rock with fangs, there are several bands that direct their energies directly at vampirism, including Cradle of Filth, Vlad in Tears, and Dead by Dawn. There's also a compilation CD called *Dracula: King of Vampires* that features over a dozen active goth bands with songs that pay homage to our favorite bloodsucker and his kin.

MUSIC TO BITE BY

The 1983 film *The Hunger* made amusing use of current vampire music in its opening credits and first scenes where vampire Miriam and her lover John prowl about a goth club looking for their dinner. Throughout the seduction and killing scenes, the 1979 gothic rock song "Bela Lugosi's Dead" is performed by its creators, the band Bauhaus.

THE DARK SIDE OF COMIC BOOKS

Forget *Superman*, *Batman*, and the *Fantastic Four*, and heaven forbid you should pick up a copy of *Archie* with the cheerful gang at Riverdale High. Vampire comics have hit the mainstream market with a bloody bang, and they make fine entertainment for any bloodthirsty enthusiast to flip through under the covers with a flashlight. Among the most enduring vampire comic book heroes is Blade, which was adapted for a trilogy of highly successful films beginning in 1998 (see Chapter 9). The comic book character began in 1973 in a supporting role in the Marvel comic *Tomb of Dracula*, went on to star and costar in several series, and was most recently a feature of the comic book *Captain Britain and MI13* in September of 2008.

30 Days of Night (later made into a hit film; see Chapter 9) was a three-issue comic by Steve Niles and Ben Templesmith, issued in 2002. A number of vampire-centered stories were presented in graphic novel form, including *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* and *Twilight*.

One of the best-known comic book characters is *Vampirella*, who began her career in 1969 and continued through 112 issues. The character originated as an alien who flees destruction on her home planet and comes to Earth to do good deeds. In an interesting twist, she falls in love with Christopher van Helsing, son of Dracula's nemesis. Other well-known vampires series in comics are *Dracula*, *Midnight Sons*, *Morbius*, *Spider*, and *Baron Blood*, along with dozens upon dozens of vampire characters who are featured in the prolific "Marvel Universe" of Marvel Comics.

VAMPIRE ART

Not surprisingly, the vast interest in all things vampiric in the past few years has also generated an incredible output of vampire art by some extremely talented artistes of the undead. Of course, richly illustrated

calendars are *de rigueur* for the lair of any self-respecting vampire or aficionado, and poster art of the walking dead will remind your “daywalking” friends that you’re no novice of the dark side.

CHAPTER 15

The Fearless Vampire Hunters

THOUGH APPARENTLY GLAMOROUS, especially if one has a supply of modern weaponry, vampire hunting is not for the faint of heart. To fight evil is to dive into the abyss, to understand what one is fighting, and, hopefully, to emerge unscathed. In this chapter, we examine the vampire hunters of history, the tools of the trade, and famous vampirologists whose insights shed light where there's perennial darkness.

THE QUINTESSENTIAL SLAYER

In the vampire realm, there is but one name that embodies the relentless vampire hunter—Van Helsing. While Dracula himself is one of the most popular literary characters in history, he would be nothing without an antagonist to expose his origins and weaknesses and work to destroy him using intellect, science, religion, psychology, and weaponry. As far as heroes go—and make no mistake, Abraham Van Helsing *is* the hero in *Dracula*—one finds in the Dutch professor all the ingredients for a successful slayer of monsters.

With Jonathan Harker, Quincey Morris, Dr. John Seward, and Arthur Holmwood serving as his warriors, and with Mina Harker acting as his muse, Van Helsing has a base upon which he can execute his plan. By making him a renowned progressive Victorian scientist, philosopher, and metaphysician, Stoker showed that Van Helsing has the open-mindedness necessary to fight an almost unbelievable threat. It's an epic battle, rife with spiritual, mental, physical, and metaphorical symbolism that has over the decades led to Van Helsing gaining immortality.

WEREWOLVES VERSUS VAMPIRES

In the 2004 film *Van Helsing*, an intriguing final confrontation takes place, when Van Helsing (Hugh Jackman), who possesses a divine measure of immortality, learns of a way to ultimately destroy Dracula (Richard Roxburgh). In this instance, the deliciously wicked bloodsucker can only be killed by a werewolf—an affliction Van Helsing acquires in order to get the job done.

Dealing with the Devil

Though there's much to be said about Van Helsing's character, consider here a key point in *Dracula*, where Van Helsing, who throughout the novel abides by the rule that discretion is the better part of valor, reveals what he knows about vampires to his band of followers. Through the vast knowledge he possesses Van Helsing details many of the characteristics associated with the majority of vampires as well as the tools vampire hunters can use to destroy them: garlic, the crucifix, beheading, confinement to their native soil, and the Host. Here is the crux of the matter, according to Van Helsing:

> *"The vampire live on, and cannot die by mere passing of the time, he can flourish when that he can fatten on the blood of the living … He can grow even younger, that his vital faculties grow strenuous … He throws no shadow, he make in the mirror no reflect … He has the strength of many of his hand … He can transform himself to wolf, he can be as bat … He can come as mist which he create … He come on moonlight rays as elemental dust … He can become so small … He can come out from anything or into anything, no matter how close it be bound or even fused by fire … He can see in the dark … He may not enter anywhere at first, unless there be some one of the household who bid him to come … He can only pass running water at the slack or the flood of the tide …"*

The Holy and the Horrific

For all the wonderful embellishments that film and fiction have added to the vampiric legacy, the basics all hark back to Stoker and his scholarly hero. Perhaps Van Helsing, ultimately, is best described by his former pupil Dr. Seward, who states that his mentor possesses “an iron nerve, a temper of the ice-brook, and indomitable resolution, self-command, and toleration exalted from virtues to blessings, and the kindliest and truest heart that beats, these form his equipment for the noble work that he is doing for mankind, work both in theory and practice, for his views are as wide as his all-embracing sympathy.” That *is* the description of a true hero, one who’s able to forgo the rationality of humanity in order to save it from an evil it doesn’t even realize exists.

LITERARY SLAYERS

Stoker's characterization of Van Helsing was undoubtedly influenced by Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu's *In a Glass Darkly*, published twenty-five years earlier in 1872 (see Chapter 8). Designed as a collection of five encounters with the occult left as posthumous accounts by Le Fanu's fictional narrator Dr. Hesselius, the five narratives include the novella *Carmilla*, considered one of the first widely influential vampire tales and from which Stoker drew substantial inspiration. The parallels between Hesselius and Van Helsing are undeniable—and it's possible that Stoker even created the name for Van Helsing as an alliterate homage to Le Fanu's narrator. In their fictional exploits, Van Helsing and Hesselius are both imbued with extraordinary knowledge of the occult and possess the same presence of mind in the face of demonic forces. If Van Helsing is the father of fictional vampire slayers, Dr. Hesselius can be considered the godfather.

Another figure who influenced Van Helsing is Le Fanu's General Spielsdorf, as it is Spielsdorf who turns vampire hunter in *Carmilla* after his niece is killed by the demon. Once he ascertains that Carmilla is a vampire, he sets off to find her body and behead her. During the closing scenes of *Carmilla*, Spielsdorf learns from a woodsman that Karnstein village became deserted as a result of a plague brought on by revenants in which many villagers perished. The revenants were detected, exhumed, and then extinguished "in the usual way, by decapitation, by the stake, and by burning." Le Fanu's description is very much in keeping with folkloric accounts of dispatching vampires. But that's not the end of it. According to the woodsman, a vampire slayer was involved as the killings continued: "A Moravian nobleman, who happened to be traveling this way, heard how matters were, and being skilled—as many people are in his country—in such affairs, he offered to deliver the village from its tormentor." To accomplish this, after seeing the fiend rise from his grave, the slayer lured the

alleged vampire to the chapel and after a struggle decapitated him. The villagers then impaled and burnt the demon.

SHERLOCK HOLMES, VAMPIRE HUNTER

Even Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes turned vampire hunter at one point. In *The Case Book of Sherlock Holmes*, the story "The Adventure of the Sussex Vampire" finds Holmes and Dr. Watson visiting a household in which a mother has twice been found bending over a baby, apparently sucking blood from wounds on its neck. In the end, the case turns out to have nothing to do with vampirism, which the rational Holmes dismisses as ignorant superstition.

YOU SLAY ME

Through the long history of vampirism in folklore, particularly in the Slavic regions of eastern Europe, there are numerous references to those rare individuals who possessed the mysterious knowledge to detect and dispatch suspected vampires. Although there's a common belief, particularly in our relatively "informed" modern age, that those who purported to have the ability to see and kill vampires were simply charlatans bent on earning a few kopecks through the fears and ignorance of their neighbors, there's little evidence, anecdotal or otherwise, that this was the case.

A significant aspect of vampire hunting is that there is often little visible evidence that slayers have indeed been successful in their efforts. Slavic vampire hunters were seldom expected to destroy a vampire that was actively on the prowl, and virtually all suspected vampires were terminated as they slept in their graves. Once dispatched, the corpses often crumbled to dust.

SOUL SUCKERS

The 1985 *Lifeforce*, directed by Tobe Hooper of *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre* fame, features a trio of outer space vampires in human form who forgo the use of fangs and blood in favor of sucking out one's soul. After initially attacking a space shuttle, they arrive in London and initiate a plague of epic proportion. Led by a single surviving astronaut from the shuttle, a party of vampire hunters tracks the space vampires and discovers they can be killed if a lead shaft or sword pierces their chest in an energy center just below their heart.

Sometimes vampire slayers serve to calm the fears of those being attacked. This was the case with the infamous Medvegia Vampires of the 1720s, where frightened villagers attributed every strange happenstance in the village to the workings of the undead. By hiring a professional vampire hunter to drive a stake

into the corpse of the most likely—usually the most recently deceased—suspect, fears would abate, odd sounds were just the wind, life would return to normal, and the hunter's mission was accomplished.

THE FEARLESS VAMPIRE KILLERS

In 1967, director Roman Polanski made *The Fearless Vampire Killers*, *or Pardon Me*, *but Your Teeth Are in My Neck*. A horror/comedy that starred not only Polanski's wife Sharon Tate but Polanski himself as the vampire hunter professor's nervous assistant, the movie spoofed many of the conventions of vampire slaying. At one point when a Jewish peasant has been killed and returns as a vampire, he attacks a servant girl, who screams and holds up a cross to ward him off. The Jewish vampire chuckles and waves a finger. "Oy vey! You got the wrong vampire," he tells her.

Healing the Dead

Given the powerful undercurrents of religious conviction, literary and scientific ignorance, and social dogma that pervaded the culture of early eastern Europe, there's every likelihood that the vampire hunter was the equivalent of a healer. It's thought that ancient medicinal healers were actually the forefathers of

designated vampire hunters and performed the same tasks in much the same way. In dealing with the inherently disturbing issues of staking, decapitation, or setting rotting corpses alight, the vampire hunter performed a duty that was generally far too gruesome for the average individual. The rituals of dispatching the body of a revenant were specific to local traditions and had to be carried out in a particular order. This was no job for the novice or the uninitiated; bringing in the services of a professional vampire hunter was the equivalent of hiring a pest control company.

A Symbiotic Relationship

In Slavic cultures, the vampire hunter was usually "marked" in some fashion to differentiate him from the rest of society. Most common of these marks was the *sabotnik*: those people born on a Saturday, the traditional Jewish Sabbath and a day that is rife with taboos. Although the Christian Orthodox Church differentiated itself early on from Judaism by declaring Sunday the Sabbath, the taboos of Saturdays became entrenched in tradition and spread through much of eastern Europe. Sabotniks were considered to be tainted with associations to demonic forces, and therefore held supernatural powers to detect evil.

"Remember the three rules of vampire hunting. One: Never, ever look them in the eyes. Two: Never, ever give up your cross. Three: Aim for the head and heart. Even with silver ammo, it won't be a killing blow anywhere else."

—*Bloody Bones* by Laurell K. Hamilton

The Fall Guy

Another common “marking” of the destined vampire hunter, or seer, was to be born of the sexual union between a widow and a deceased husband who had become a vampire. Such individuals were regionally known as *glogove*, *vampirdzii*, *vuperari*, or *vampirovici*, and attributed with much the same abilities to detect and destroy evil as the sabotniks, and for the same reasons—they shared supernatural powers with the undead.

The concept of the glogove’s birth as the bastard child of a woman and a “vampire” illustrates a significant point in vampire lore. In scientifically ignorant early eastern Europe, and indeed in educated modern times, inexplicable occurrences *require* explanation to pacify a nervous population, quell hysterias, and maintain social unity. Culturally, women who lost their husbands were expected to remain chaste until they remarried. Should a recent widow become pregnant, her most effective line of defense was to blame her dead husband, who had clearly become a vampire and forced her into sexual relations. Through the ages, there has been a cultural requirement to seek out and exterminate suspected perpetrators of misdeeds, and that need placed the equally stigmatized vampire hunter in the unique position of having the ability to perform a distasteful but necessary function.

THE VAMPIRE HUNTER'S KIT

One of the most intriguing and continuing mysteries of the twentieth century involves the manufacture and sale of vampire-killing kits attributed to a Professor Ernst Blomberg of Germany, with antique percussion-style pistols made by gunsmith Nicholas Plomdeur of Liège, Belgium, supposedly dating from the late 1800s. A number of Blomberg's kits have turned up in recent years, and some have sold for astonishing amounts, including one at Sotheby's that went for $12,000 in 2003. The Sotheby's kit consisted of a walnut box with a hinged lid, housing an antique pistol, ten silver bullets, a wooden stake and mallet, crucifix, rosary, and several vials of garlic powder and various demon-thwarting serums. The authenticity of Professor Blomberg's kits has come under a fair amount of scrutiny in recent years, with very few reliable results, and even less hard evidence that he even existed.

BEHIND THE HOAX

In 2005 Michael de Winter posted to SurvivalArts.com a short note to the effect that he was the man behind the original Blomberg's Vampire Hunting Kits. "Regarding Professor Ernst Blomberg and the Gunmaker of Liege, Nicholas Plomdeur," he writes, "both these gentlemen were figments of my imagination and I was amazed to find mention on a website of Nicholas Plomdeur's early career in Paris." Evidently others imitated what de Winter began, and the myth of Ernst Blomberg and Nicholas Plomdeur flourished.

There is, however, anecdotal evidence that vampire-killing kits became popular in England and western Europe soon after the release of Bram Stoker's *Dracula* in 1897. These were supposedly made for nervous travelers to eastern Europe, but more likely were purchased as souvenirs. Nevertheless, most of those kits were well made and expensive, designed for the well-to-do who had a penchant for unusual contemporary novelties.

Early vampire hunters in eastern Europe made do with shovels, hand-carved wooden stakes and a mallet, and an axe for decapitating the unsuspecting undead. The self-respecting vampire hunter of today, though, wouldn't be caught dead without an arsenal of demon-dispatching tools close at hand. If you're planning on embarking on a career in slaying, there are a few mandatory items you'll need to assemble:

- **A wooden box:** Preferably made of ash or hawthorn wood with a cross carved into the lid.
- **Stakes:** Just about any stake or sharp pointed objects should suffice, but according to lore, any local hardwood such as ash, hawthorn, juniper, wild rose, whitethorn, or buckthorn is ideal. In some cases, silver stakes can also prove useful, depending on the type of revenant you're facing.

- **Crosses or crucifixes:** Keeping in line with your wooden box and stakes, crosses or crucifixes should be made out of ash or hawthorn wood.
- **Holy water:** Most vampire hunters carry holy water around in vials or flasks. The supply can be replaced or augmented by the local priest.
- **Fire:** Traditional vampire hunters rely on matches, candles, and torches. A few butane lighters and maybe a small blowtorch would seem a bit more reliable.
- **Mirrors:** Mirrors are helpful both for detecting vampires, since they cast no reflection, and for focusing sunlight on them. Get something shatterproof and larger than a compact unless you're using it to reflect sunlight in a highly directed burn.
- **Garlic:** Probably the most common standby. Vampires hate garlic with a passion.
- **The Bible:** Threatening a vampire with the Holy Book while reeling off a few choice verses is a standard vampire hunter tactic. Just hope he's not a Jewish, Hindu, Buddhist, or atheistic bloodsucker.

Now that you've got the tools, how do you go about trapping a vampire?

HOW TO CATCH A VAMPIRE

In Wes Craven's 2000 film, *Dracula 2000*, Van Helsing (Christopher Plummer) came up with an innovative way to trap Dracula (Gerard Butler) by making use of the basics. Leading the demonic sucker into a dark London alleyway, Van Helsing disappears into a doorway. Dracula pauses, sensing something is afoot. At that point, Van Helsing reappears and Dracula reaches for him, only to discover that he is staring at a mirror. Given that he casts no reflection, Van Helsing is actually standing *behind* Dracula and brings down iron bars around the fiend to form a prison cell.

Nailing a Nightcrawler

One of the best methods of catching vampires is to corner them in such a way that you can expose them to sunlight, torch them, or even drown them, as was done to Christopher Lee's Dracula in *Dracula: Prince of Darkness*. The key is making use of whatever weaponry or on-the-fly ingenuity you can conjure up. In the 1979 *Dracula*, for example, starring Frank Langella as the Count, Dracula's last stand in the hold of a ship gives Van Helsing the opportunity to entangle and hoist him upward to the top of the mast to burn in the sun's rays. *Dracula 2000* employed a similar method, with Mary Van Helsing wrapping cable around Dracula's neck and falling with him off the edge of a building. She watches from below, as Dracula dangles from the building and burns with the rising sun.

REPELLING WITH ROWAN

Like garlic, the rowan tree, commonly known as the mountain ash, is believed to repel the undead. Its wood is used to make crosses or in gravesites to keep a vampire at bay. Also, those who avoid going near mountain ash could be viewed as vampiric suspects.

Bait and Switch

For many literary and cinematic vampires, especially in classic films, the standard form of destruction is finding the vampire at rest and staking it through the heart. However, that doesn't necessarily work on all modern-day vampires. Every vampire hunter must assess and capitalize on his opponent's weaknesses. Whatever the situation, it's safe to say that there are no steadfast rules in destroying a vampire. The best you can do is start with the basics and go from there to find what works.

"Most of all, I longed for death. I know that now. I invited it. A release from the pain of living. My invitation was open to anyone. To the whore at my side. To the pimp that followed. But it was a vampire that accepted it."

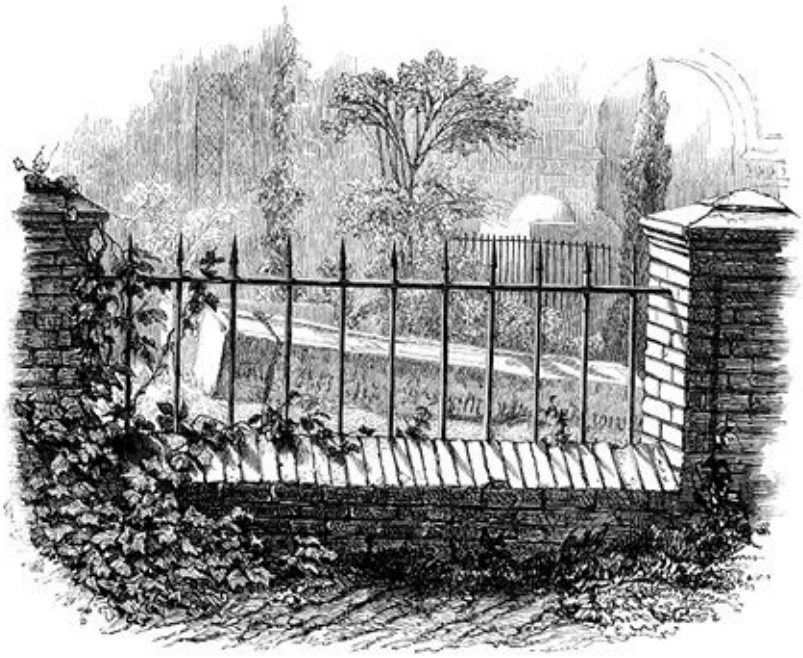
—ARMAND, *INTERVIEW WITH THE VAMPIRE* BY ANNE RICE

THE HIGHGATE VAMPIRE

Although the modern vampire hunter is a relative oddity in comparison to the ubiquitous slayers of old eastern Europe, one of the best-known vampire hunts occurred at Highgate Cemetery in London in 1970, and it was conducted not by a single intrepid hunter, but two competing “vampire slayers” who’ve repeatedly faced-off to deal with the Highgate phenomenon. David Farrant and Sean Manchester were the combatants in this mortal, if not comic, crusade against the forces of evil, and they have vigorously defended their positions for over thirty years.

Grave Consequences

Strange doings at Highgate Cemetery began as early as the 1920s, when witnesses reported sightings of a huge batlike creature near the cemetery. According to the tale, investigating police later saw the creature roaming the grounds and chased it away. Soon after, several victims sought medical attention for bite wounds on their necks, and rumors of vampires afoot quickly took off and remained entrenched for decades. In the early 1960s, several vampiric sightings were again reported in the cemetery, as people reported bodies rising from graves and hovering phantoms. With an increasing volume of rumor and media attention, Highgate Cemetery drew the interest of a group of thrill-seeking occultists in 1969, among whom were David Farrant and Sean Manchester. These two infiltrated the cemetery grounds to uncover the origins of the vampiric being.



Read All about It!

Bickering between Farrant and Manchester proved irresistible to the headline-hungry British media, and when Manchester announced his intention to conduct a vampire hunt in mid-March of 1970, the press quickly televised interviews with both men. Within hours, a horde of curiosity seekers mobbed the cemetery, climbing over locked gates and walls for a firsthand glimpse of the notorious "vampires." Harried police officers finally emptied the cemetery grounds, but Highgate Cemetery's place in vampire lore was officially secured.

Emboldened by the commotion at Highgate, Farrant was arrested several months later inside the cemetery carrying a crucifix, a mallet, and a wooden stake. Although acquitted of trespassing charges, Farrant's arrest again drew media attention. Manchester, by his own accounts, also visited the cemetery and claimed to have discovered the remains of a vampire, although a friend convinced him to let it rest. Years later, Manchester claimed that he discovered the corpse of the same vampire inside a vacant house nearby.

THE RIVALS

Both Sean Manchester and David Farrant went on to create separate cottage industries out of their respective “encounters” with vampires and have written numerous books describing their exploits. Self-professed vampire experts and hunters, the pair have maintained the same melodramatic feuding that gained them their initial attention, and continue the theme to this very day.

FAMOUS VAMPIROLOGISTS

Over the centuries there have been a number of scholars, historian, chroniclers, experts, and folklorists who specialize in the study of vampires and revenants. Some of these individuals have dedicated their lives to learning, revealing, and debating the undead, basing their opinions and studies on everything from folklore to alleged accounts of vampirism to serial killers to modern-day blood fetish practices. Though many have brought to light legends surrounding bloodsucking revenants, there are a few who've staked their reputations in giving us a more well-rounded view of the vampire:

- **Leo Allatius:** A Greek Catholic scholar of the mid-1600s, Allatius was one of the first historians to establish a connection between vampires and Greek history. Allatius's work was one of the first examples of the Catholic Church's acceptance of vampires as a reality.
- **Giuseppe Davanzati:** In response to waves of vampire hysteria in Europe, Italian archbishop Davanzati published an influential treatise in 1744 denouncing the vampire phenomenon as hysteria and delusion. He became known as a leading authority on vampirism within the Catholic Church and throughout Europe.
- **Dom Antoine Augustin Calmet:** French Benedictine monk Calmet was among the first clerics to address vampirism and its relationship with

witches and demons in his 1746 treatise on vampires and revenants, which lent a significant element of credence to their existence.

- **Franz Hartmann:** During the early 1900s, Hartmann, a noted German physician and occultist of the era, wrote of widely distributed and purportedly true incidents regarding vampires. Hartmann was an originator of the concept of psychic vampirism, explaining that while vampires didn't consume human blood, they did consume human energy and life force (see Chapter 14).
- **Montague Summers:** No list of vampirologists would be complete without Montague Summers. Despite Summers's notoriety as an expert and author of several vampire studies beginning in 1928, he's also known as an opinionated eccentric, and today it's generally accepted that he replaced careful research with often fanciful embellishments.
- **Raymond T. McNally and Radu Florescu:** The dynamic duo of vampirism, McNally and Florescu researched the origins of Stoker's *Dracula* and formulated the first theories that *Dracula* was based on the exploits of Vlad Dracula—a concept that has come under fire since its inception in 1972. McNally is also the author of *Dracula Was a Woman: In Search of the Blood Countess of Transylvania*, in which he explores the myths, realities, and horrors attributed to notoriously bloodthirsty killer Erzsébet Báthory (see Chapter 12).
- **Elizabeth Miller:** A University of Newfoundland professor, Miller is internationally recognized as one of the world's leading experts on Vlad Dracula, Bram Stoker and his *Dracula*, and vampire history and lore. She has written dozens of articles and six well-respected books including: *Dracula*: *The Shade and the Shadow*, *Reflections on Dracula*, *Dracula*: *Sense & Nonsense*, and *A Dracula Handbook*.

COMBATING AN IMMORTAL

Let's say for a moment that you're being stalked by a vampire. How do you protect yourself from the undead fiend? What weapons do you need in your supernatural arsenal? Most importantly, how can you destroy a vampire? Fortunately, there are many different methods and implements available to you. These range from a vampire's abhorrence of garlic and its fear of certain religious items, to decapitation and driving a stake through the creature's heart and burning the corpse.

While it is possible to destroy a vampire, keeping them at a distance—if only temporarily—is a much safer option. Over the course of centuries, through folklore, fiction, and film, we've become well acquainted with a host of items that can be used to deter creatures of the night and keep them away from their potential victims. Some of these objects—for example, garlic or crucifixes—may not necessarily kill an immortal, but they are thought to offer some protection against them. After all, no vampire hunter worth his or her salt would fail to have crosses, garlic, holy water, stakes, a few memorized biblical passages, and a way to create fire readily at his or her disposal.

As society has evolved, so has the vampire and its aversions, perversions, and the ways we can destroy it. What may repel or kill the bloodsucker of legend may prove ineffective on a wide range of modern fiends. But it's wise to start with the basics, the tried and true methods of yesteryear.

PRACTICAL PROTECTION

Several items that you may have around the house can, in many cases, repel bloodsuckers. Garlic, salt, candles, incense, and bells, among other items, have in the past been proven effective against vampires. Some of these methods are steeped in folklore and used by early writers of vampire fiction such as John Polidori, James Malcolm Rymer, Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu, and of course Bram Stoker.

Garlic

Garlic is one of the most common items used to ward off the vampire's bite, and a protection against evil that's existed since ancient times. A member of the lily family, garlic contains natural healing powers and has long been used for medicinal and healing purposes as well as herbal uses. In much of folklore and in Stoker's *Dracula*, a vampire's mouth is stuffed with garlic after beheading; similarly a corpse's mouth is filled with garlic to prevent its joining the undead. In *Dracula*, Van Helsing fills Lucy's room with garlic flowers and bulbs, even rubbing it all over the door jamb and fireplace to keep Dracula from entering.

Vampiric folklore is rife with individuals making use of garlic as a repellant. Given that a vampire's senses are heightened, particularly its vision, hearing, and smell, it stands to reason that garlic, whether it's worn around the neck as a wreath, strewn around a house, rubbed onto a human, animal, or object, or even liquefied and sprayed would be enough to keep the undead at bay.

During times of plague, it was often believed that smells could not only ward off evil and the stench of death, but disease as well. In light of the fact that vampirism in itself is often considered a plague, it's not surprising that garlic came into common use for this purpose. Other odiferous means were often employed to hold disease at bay, including incense, juniper, manure, human feces, and all types of perfumes.

BLOODSUCKERS, GREAT AND SMALL

One theory of why garlic repels vampires is born of the similarity between vampires and mosquitoes, both of which bite their victims and drink their blood, and both of which can spread disease through their bites. Mosquitoes and other insects are repelled by garlic.

Salt and Seeds

Many of us still subscribe to superstitious practices: we knock on wood, avoid stepping on cracks, and toss salt over our shoulder for luck or to ward off evil. In the case of the latter, there's good reason to keep some salt on hand in case of an incursion of vampires. Sodium chloride is a staple of ancient and modern supernatural, paranormal, and religious beliefs. Throughout history, salt has been used as a means of preservation both with food and in the form of natron, which Egyptians used for perfecting mummification processes. Salt also serves as a symbol of purity and a means by which one can repel evil. In some legends, the undead cannot cross a line of salt, for which reason windows, doors, fireplaces, and entire houses were often surrounded with an unbroken line of salt if vampires were thought to be on the prowl.

Like salt, seeds have often been used as a vampire repellant. While mustard

seed is the most prominent—possibly for its religious connection as mentioned in one of Jesus' parables—other small seeds and grains such as poppy, oats, millet, and carrot, to name a few, can also be used, as can the thorns gathered from wild roses. One legend is that if a vampire encounters the seeds, he's required to count each seed before coming to a village to procure victims. Some folkloric tales mention that the vampire can count only one seed per year, so even a small handful of the seeds will keep evil at bay for a long time. Another speculation is that vampires become so caught up in obsessively counting the seeds that they lose track of time and are forced to retreat as the sun begins to rise. Seeds as well as salt were also sprinkled in and around corpses and coffins to prevent vampirism or keep a vampire from rising from the grave.

HALLOWED WEAPONS

In many legends of vampires, religious icons play a strong role in defending against the undead. Stoker used this underlying theme prominently in *Dracula*, but not all writers have continued this tradition, and the effectiveness of religious weapons against the vampire varies. In the film *Interview with the Vampire*, Louis de Pointe du Lac flat out tells his interviewer that he's rather fond of crucifixes, a common theme among modern vampires who often mock and scorn frightened mortals who attempt to fend off attack using a holy artifact. To some, the power of a crucifix or holy water exists only if you believe—and the undead would be unlikely to believe. Nonetheless, hallowed weaponry such as crosses remain, much like garlic, intrinsically linked to vampirism.

"PLEASE ENTER!"

One piece of vampire lore says that to enter a house for the first time, a vampire must be invited. This comes up in the film *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* in which a vampire classmate of Luke Perry tearfully begs his former friend, "Let me in, man!" Perry refuses for the very good reason that he notices his former friend is floating outside his window two stories off the ground.

Crosses or Crucifixes

One of the most often used weapons against a vampire is a cross or crucifix. The crucifix, which includes the figure of the crucified Jesus, is primarily a Roman Catholic symbol; other Christian religions prefer a plain cross, representative of Christ after the crucifixion. It's said that a crucifix has more power than a cross, but again, in both cases its energy is largely dependent on how strongly the person holding it believes in its symbolism. In *Dracula*, a

frightened village gives a confounded Jonathan Harker a rosary with a crucifix as he awaits his departure for Castle Dracula.

CROSS IN THE WIND

In the 1960 film *The Brides of Dracula*, Van Helsing (played by Peter Cushing) makes innovative use of a windmill against David Peel's evil Baron Meinster. Van Helsing jumps on the windblade, carefully turning it so as to create the giant shadow of a cross which on the ground below confines and helps destroy the baron.

In traditional lore, the crucifix will burn the skin of the vampire when pressed against him, and mark the flesh of a person who has been bitten but not yet fully transformed into a vampire. Additionally in some legends, the crucifix or cross will steal the creature's source of strength, rendering him less powerful. Some stories claim that crosses or crucifixes hung on a door will keep a vampire from entering a room or that a cross placed on a gravesite will render their entering the grave impossible. Perhaps the best thing about crosses is that they're easily improvised using items such as candlesticks, swords, random bits of wood—anything that can replicate its crossed positioning. As is the case with more contemporary vampire caricatures, however, crosses and crucifixes, while typically used in some measure, often present no threat to a vampire's existence.

Holy Water

As one of the primary symbols of life, water retains its power as a spiritual and physical cleansing mechanism. We spent our first nine months immersed in water inside our mothers' stomachs, and indeed our bodies are almost entirely composed of water. That said, revenants who are no long among the living or the dead have little use or respect for water—especially that which has been blessed. Used in many religious ceremonies such as baptisms and absolution rites, holy water, which is blessed and made sacred by the clergy—especially in the Catholic and Eastern Orthodox churches—is believed to have special powers and uses. Among them is the ability to repel most unholy creatures including vampires.

Because holy water is pure and blessed it's said to burn the flesh of demons like acid burns human flesh, causing extreme pain and peeling burns. In the case of newly created revenants, this could prove fatal. Throughout vampire lore, when bodies of suspected vampires were exhumed, holy water was often used in the rituals meant to keep the undead from rising. In the same vein, it was also sprinkled atop a grave or over a coffin to prevent the creature's inevitable return to its sanctuary. Much like salt, holy water can also be sprinkled or poured onto windowsills and doorways to prevent a vampire from entering.

Eucharist Wafer

The Eucharist wafer is yet another religious symbol thought to offer protection against vampires, though it's not as commonly mentioned as crosses or holy water. The wafer, which is a thin piece of blessed bread, represents the body of Christ in the Holy Communion sacrament. Like a crucifix, the wafer can burn the flesh of a vampire, and leave a mark if pressed against the skin of its victims. In *Dracula*, Van Helsing, after finding Lucy's empty coffin, shocks his cohorts by finely crumbling up wafers, combining them with putty, and using the mix as a sealant around the door to Lucy's tomb. When asked what the mixture is, he replies that it's "the Host," which he brought from Amsterdam. Later he again makes use of the wafer on several occasions, the first in an effort to keep Mina from further harm. When he touches the wafer to her forehead, however, she screams as her skin is seared as if touched by "a piece of white hot metal." After that incident, the hunting party proceeds to Carfax and is faced with Dracula's boxes of earth. Again, Van Helsing produces the consecrated Host:

> *"And now, my friends, we have a duty here to do. We must sterilize this earth, so sacred of holy memories, that he has brought from a far distant land for such fell use. He has chosen this earth because it has been holy. Thus we defeat him with his own weapon, for we make it more holy still. It was sanctified to such use of man, now we sanctify it to God."*

Van Helsing then opens the soil-filled boxes, lays the wafers upon the earth, and reseals them to prevent Dracula returning to them. Stoker's use of the Eucharist speaks to a range of issues, including good versus evil, moral versus immoral, and dark versus light. No doubt the religious significance of the wafer was a religious reinforcement to the spiritual turmoil of the Victorian era. One possible reason that the wafers aren't as popularly used as holy water is likely due to accessibility. As a powerful representation of the body of Christ, wafers are typically locked away in tabernacles within churches and chapels and not easily acquired. In the 1992 film *Bram Stoker's Dracula*, Francis Ford Coppola

paid homage to Stoker's Eucharistic ploy, including the searing of Mina's forehead and the subsequent disappearance of the scar when Dracula is destroyed.

ILL MET BY MOONLIGHT

While the power of moonlight is more closely associated with werewolves, and primarily used in film and fiction as a matter of creating ambiance, it has played a factor in bringing vampires to life. In John Polidori's *The Vampyre*, Lord Ruthven is reanimated after he gives the order that his corpse "be exposed to the first cold ray of the moon that rose after his death."

MIRROR, MIRROR ON THE WALL

One of the more startling aspects of vampires is that they cast no reflection in a mirror. If the eyes are indeed the window to one's soul, then the inability to see a vampire's reflection speaks to its lack of soul. This raises the question of whether or not vampires even have souls, other than one doomed to eternal damnation or to ultimate absolution once their curse is lifted.

The mirror aversion appears in Stoker's *Dracula*, and after it was published it quickly became an accepted part of the vampire legend. In Chapter Two, Jonathan Harker notes in his journal that Castle Dracula is void of mirrors. Later in that chapter, in one of the more chilling scenes of the book, Harker is shaving using his small shaving mirror when the Count comes up behind him. He casts no reflection, a fact that does not go unnoticed by Harker, who has cut himself, nor to the Count: "'Take care,' he said, 'take care how you cut yourself. It is more dangerous than you think in this country.' Then seizing the shaving glass, he went on. 'And this is the wretched thing that has done the mischief. It is a foul bauble of man's vanity. Away with it!' And opening the window with one wrench of his terrible hand, he flung out the glass, which was shattered into a thousand pieces on the stones of the courtyard far below."

HOW TO KILL A VAMPIRE

Vampires, as with all revenants, exist in a strange dichotomy. They're no longer living, and they're no longer dead—they're undead. So how can you kill them? You may have to do a bit of experimentation to ascertain what type of vampire you're dealing with and thus the appropriate method of destruction. What's curious about all types of fictional and cinematic vampires is that almost always there exists a way of killing them by traditional means, even if those methods may be somewhat disguised.

What's at Stake?

Perhaps the most common method associated with destroying a vampire is staking them through the heart. No doubt, it's a procedure that's been well used throughout literature and film, as it makes for a spectacular end to an unearthly villainous rampage. Though the practice of staking was introduced in early literature, particularly Le Fanu's *Carmilla* and Stoker's *Dracula*, the concept of using a sharpened stake is entrenched in not only vampiric folklore, but in the legends of numerous other revenants as well. The idea was to make certain they didn't rise from the grave. In some traditions a buried body would have a stake driven completely through it to hold it into the ground; some cultures went so far as to drive spikes or thorns through the tongue to prevent the alleged vampire from using it to draw blood.

WAYS OF STAKING

In some legends, stakes were pounded in the ground above a grave to assure a reanimated corpse was staked if it attempted to arise from the earth. Sometimes heads were staked to secure them to the ground. A few legends call for a corpse to be staked through the back and buried face-down to prevent it digging its way up and out. Some corpses, in

addition to staking, were also beheaded, had their mouths stuffed with garlic, or had their hearts removed and burned to cinders.

One of the benefits of staking is that in many instances it's reported that the staked vampire's face shows a moment of peace and contentment before crumbling into dust. In folklore, and throughout film and fiction, this is the signal that the afflicted individual's spirit and soul is finally at peace. However, sometimes staking a vampire doesn't necessarily mean he or she can't be resurrected.

In the 1970 film *Taste the Blood of Dracula*, Christopher Lee's Dracula is burned to cinders. Later that year, in *Scars of Dracula*, these ashes are bled upon by a leaky, blood-engorged bat and lo and behold, it's enough to resurrect the king of vampires. The same principle applies to Blacula in the 1973 sequel *Scream Blacula Scream*.

Let There Be Light

Another common form of vampiric destruction is sunlight. Given that vampires are reanimated undead corpses that in most cases have no beating heart and are cold as ice, the warmth of the sun provides an easy mechanism for vampiric destruction. However, that convention doesn't always apply. A host of folkloric vampires were able to move about during daylight hours as well as both traditional and modern-day vamps in both fiction and film. The Hungarian *vampir*, for example, is a reanimated corpse that moves to a new village. As with many serial killers, it lives normally by day but becomes a monster by night. In *Dracula*, Bram Stoker twice allowed Dracula to appear during daylight hours, though his powers were greatly diminished. Whitley Strieber didn't even go that far with his immortals in *The Hunger*. They could function perfectly well in daylight, as does Blade, in part due to his hybrid human/vampire disposition.

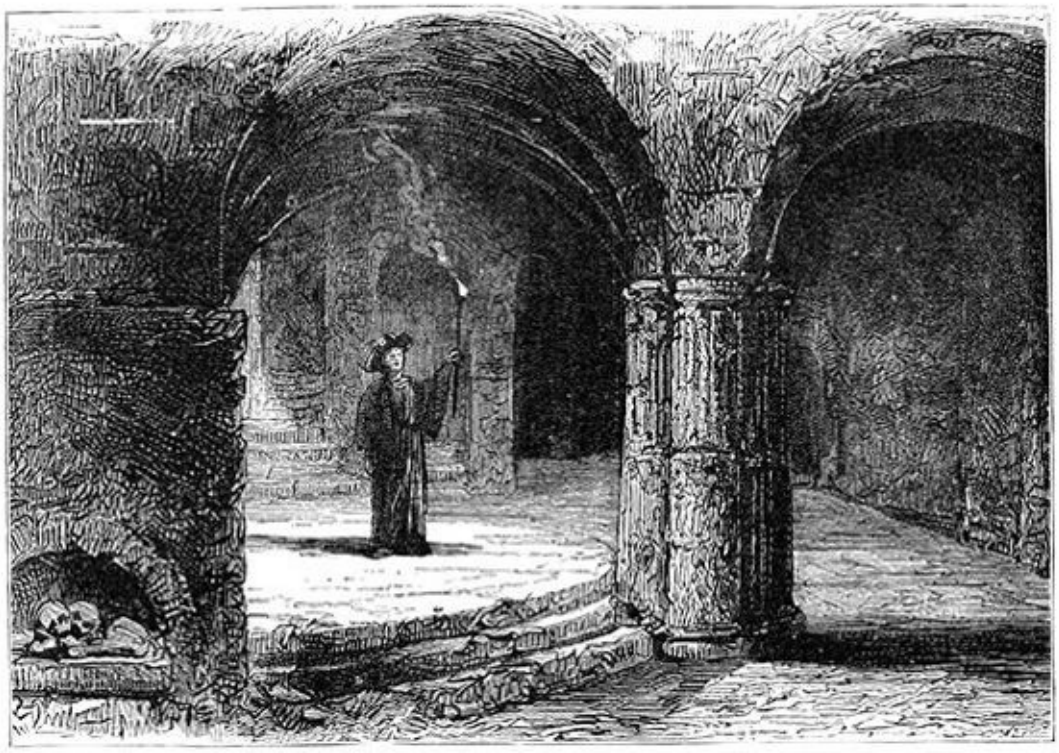
VAMPIRE VERSUS VAMPIRE

Arguably the most evil twist to the destructive capabilities of sunlight is when it's used by vampires to kill other vampires. In *Interview with the Vampire*, Anne Rice assigns that fate to Claudia and Gabrielle as punishment for attempting to kill Lestat. In the film *Underworld*, vampire elder Viktor bestowed the same doom on his daughter Sonja for carrying a child conceived with Lycan leader Lucian.

Sunlight as a destructive mechanism came to public prominence in F.W. Murnau's 1922 landmark silent film *Nosferatu*, in which Count Orlok falls into a trap set by Ellen Hutter (aka Mina Harker) after she reads *The Book of the Vampires*. She keeps Orlok in her bedroom, occupied with her bloodletting, until cockcrow signals his exposure to the sun and his spectacular disappearance into a wisp of smoke. Since that time, many cinematic and literary vampires have suffered from a daylight aversion; a few have attained the power to embrace it; or in the case of Anne Rice's vampires—in particular, Armand—they make the choice to commit suicide by flying into the sun.

Fire

As far as fire is concerned, it's one of the mainstays of human history since the dawn of man. It keeps us warm and works in food preparation. It also is used as a method of destruction. Fire is often used by witches, sorcerers, shamans, holy men, and all manner of conjurers for both good and evil. In the metaphorical realm, fire, like water, is a means of cleansing and purification. In the Bible God appears to Moses in the form of a burning bush. With all of that history behind it, fire has both a good and a bad reputation. In vampiric folklore it's often used as one of the means for combating evil, though how effective it is largely depends on the way it's used.



Folkloric creatures were often exhumed and their bodies burned to ashes. For the most part, this is the safest way to assume a vampire is indeed dead. But in the modern era, more than a few fictional and cinematic vampires have been resurrected despite having been reduced to a pile of ash, or with even a small portion of their ashes serving as the catalyst. The same goes for threatening a vampire with fire. Given that many vampires have regenerative capacities that allow them to recover quickly from things such as stabbings and gunshot wounds, setting one on fire doesn't provide a guarantee of destruction. In the 2004 film *Van Helsing*, for example, Dracula is violently thrown into a huge burning fireplace by Frankenstein, only to walk out of the flames as his burnt face quickly returns to normal.

Waterways

As previously discussed, water is one of the primary symbols of life, and while holy water can do damage to a vampire, unblessed water presents the undead with challenges as well. One commonly held folkloric belief is that

vampires cannot cross over running water, nor can they swim across it. However, as we've seen in Stoker's *Dracula* and many other cases, they can be carried over water by a ship. Whether vampires can actually drown is debatable; some legends suggest that though a vampire cannot swim, it would suffer no ill effects if pulled from the water after a long immersion. One film in particular, the 1966 *Dracula: Prince of Darkness*, made good use of this legend by having Christopher Lee's bloodsucker become submerged in icy waters, only to be resurrected in *Dracula Has Risen from the Grave*.

BANISHMENT OF THE VAMPIRE

Still other folkloric legends have it that vampires and other revenants can be banished to remote islands surrounded by water, thereby assuring that they have no means of interacting with society and could even die of malnourishment. Salt water in those instances provides a twofold measure of protection, as vampires are also repelled by salt.

Off with Your Head!

As folklore and common logic would dictate, decapitation is the most obvious and permanent means of destroying a vampire. For the most part, beheading a dark devil does indeed do the trick, but there are a few caveats. As with fire, if a vampire possesses the power of regeneration, it's conceivable he'll be able to reposition his head upon his neck and it will reattach itself. Throughout folklore, corpses were very often beheaded and the head was burned along with the body or removed and even buried separately with the mouth stuffed with garlic.

WATCH YOUR ASH

As we've learned, vampires are infinitely more complex creatures than one might expect, each one possessing its own powers and capabilities that are largely drawn from folkloric revenants, early vampire literature, and cinema. Of course, the only way one can protect oneself from a vampire and uncover its weakness and potentially destroy it is to learn how to detect and slay it.

APPENDIX

Recommended Nonfiction Reading

Ashley, Leonard, R.N. *The Complete Book of Vampires*. Barricade Books, New York, NY, 1998.

Barber, Paul. *Vampires, Burial, and Death: Folklore and Reality*. Yale University Press, New Haven, CT, 1988.

Belford, Barbara. *Bram Stoker and the Man Who Was Dracula*. Da Capo Press, Cambridge, MA, 2002.

Bunson, Matthew. *The Vampire Encyclopedia*. Gramercy, New York, NY, 2000.

Copper, Basil. *The Vampire in Legend and Fact*. Citadel Press, New York, NY, 1998.

Curran, Bob. *Encyclopedia of the Undead: A Field Guide to the Creatures That Cannot Rest in Peace*. New Page Books, Franklin Lakes, NJ, 2006.

Dresser, Norine. *American Vampires*. W.W. Norton, New York, NY, 1989.

Everson, William K. *Classics of the Horror Film*. Citadel Press, New York, NY, 1990.

Guiley, Rosemary Ellen. *The Complete Vampire Companion: Legend and Lore of the Living Dead*. Macmillan, New York, NY, 1994.

Guiley, Rosemary Ellen. *The Encyclopedia of Vampires, Werewolves, and Other Monsters*. Checkmark Books, New York, NY, 2005.

Hardy, Phil. *The Overlook Film Encyclopedia: Horror*. Overlook Press, New York, NY, 1995.

Haworth-Maden, Clare. *Dracula: Everything You Always Wanted to Know about the Man, the Myth, and the Movies*. Crescent Books, New York, NY, 1992.

Mascetti, Manuela Dunn. *Vampire: The Complete Guide to the World of the Undead*. Viking Studio Books, New York, NY, 1992.

McCarty, John. *The Modern Horror Film*. Carol Publishing Group, New York, NY, 1990.

McClelland, Bruce. *Slayers and Their Vampires*. University of Michigan Press, Ann Arbor, 2006.

McNally, Raymond T., *Dracula Was a Woman: In Search of the Blood Countess of Transylvania*. McGraw-Hill, New York, NY, 1987.

McNally, Raymond T., and Radu Florescu. *Dracula: Prince of Many Faces*. Little, Brown, and Company, Boston, MA, 1989.

McNally, Raymond T., and Radu Florescu. *The Essential Dracula*. Mayflower Books, New York, NY, 1979.

McNally, Raymond T., and Radu Florescu. *In Search of Dracula*. Houghton Mifflin Company, New York, NY, 1994.

Melton, J. Gordon. *The Vampire Book: The Encyclopedia of the Undead*. Visible Ink Press, Canton, MI, 1999.

Miller, Elizabeth. *A Dracula Handbook*. Xlibris Corp., 2005.

Miller, Elizabeth. *Dracula: Sense and Nonsense*. Desert Island Books, Westcliff-on-Sea, UK, 2000.

Pattison, Barrie. *The Seal of Dracula*. Crown Publishing, New York, NY, 1979.

Ramsland, Katherine. Piercing the Darkness: Undercover with Vampires in America Today. HarperCollins, New York, NY, 1998.

Ramsland, Katherine. *Prism of the Night: A Biography of Anne Rice*. Dutton, New York, NY, 1991.

Ramsland, Katherine. *The Science of Vampires*. Berkley Boulevard Books, New York, NY, 2002.

Ramsland, Katherine. *The Vampire Companion: The Official Guide to Anne Rice's The Vampire Chronicles*. Ballantine Books, New York, NY, 1993

Schechter, Harold, and David Everitt. *The A to Z Encyclopedia of Serial Killers*. Pocket Books, New York, NY, 1996.

Summers, Montague. *The Vampire in Europe*. University Books, New Hyde Park, NY, 1961.

Weiss, Andrea. *Vampires and Violets: Lesbians in Film*. Penguin Books, New York, NY, 1993.

Wright, Dudley. *The Book of Vampires*. Dorset Press, New York, NY, 1987.

Copyright © 2014 by F+W Media, Inc.
All rights reserved.
This book, or parts thereof, may not be reproduced in any form without permission from the publisher; exceptions are made for brief excerpts used in published reviews.

Published by
Adams Media, a division of F+W Media, Inc.
57 Littlefield Street, Avon, MA 02322. U.S.A.
www.adamsmedia.com

Contains material adapted and abridged from *The Everything® Vampire Book*, by Barb Karg, Arjean Spaite, and Rick Sutherland, copyright © 2009 by F+W Media, Inc., ISBN 10: 1-60550-631-1; ISBN 13: 978-1-60550-637-9.

ISBN 10: 1-4405-8076-6
ISBN 13: 978-1-4405-8076-5
eISBN 10: 1-4405-8077-4
eISBN 13: 978-1-4405-8077-2

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Sherman, Aubrey.
Vampires / Aubrey Sherman.
pages cm
Includes index.
ISBN-13: 978-1-4405-8076-5 (pob)
ISBN-10: 1-4405-8076-6 (pob)
ISBN-13: 978-1-4405-8077-2 (ebook)
ISBN-10: 1-4405-8077-4 (ebook)
1. Vampires. I. Title.
GR830.V3S5 2015
398.21--dc23

2014009674

Many of the designations used by manufacturers and sellers to distinguish their product are claimed as trademarks. Where those designations appear in this book and F+W Media, Inc. was aware of a trademark claim, the designations have been printed with initial capital letters.

Interior images © Wikimedia Commons (public domain),
123RF, iStockphoto.com, and Clipart.com.

Cover design by Erin Dawson.
Cover images © Clipart.com, sdmix/123RF, and Dover Publications.